

COUSIN MARTHA.

BY ELLA RODMAN.

PART I.

It was the first of June, and we all sat down in family council to determine upon the important question of our summer arrangements. Where should we go first? The election was a puzzling one, for all pulled different ways, and no candidate received more than one vote. Papa was fond of travelling, and exhausted his eloquence in favor of Niagara; mamma loved quiet, and suggested a country farm house; (she had surely forgotten the roosters, and all those dreadful crows and cacklings that rudely drag one from the land of dreams,) Sophia was given to "purling streams" and "shady bowers," and *her* choice had already taken firm root in Geneva; Tom, precociously seized with a fancy for going about and seeking what he could devour—in other words, being very fond of gunning and fishing, held out against a three hours' siege of his sisters' tongues in favor of some little, hum-drum village in Connecticut; and your humble servant, like an amiable weather-cock, stood ready to go with the victor.

We made such a din and confusion of tongues, that papa insisted upon it we quite put to shame the voters at election time; and Cousin Martha, who had come to spend the day, looked mildly up from her sewing, and smiled, half sadly, at our eagerness. "Perhaps," thought I, "it is selfish in us thus to discuss our plans of pleasure before one to whom such enjoyments are forbidden treats"—for Cousin Martha was a "poor relation," and quite unlikely ever to be anything else. Poor thing! she had known better days; but an unfortunate marriage reduced her from her once proud station, and she was now a childless widow, with very slender means.

"It reminds me so of old times," said she, as I seated myself beside her, "how well I recollect one summer, many years ago, when I, a giddy girl of seventeen, imagined that the life which lay before me was an uninterrupted pathway of roses. And how they all laughed at me that season! But I will tell you about it.

"My father, one evening, asked us where we were to go that summer; and, before the others could answer, I had seized a newspaper, and expatiated most enthusiastically upon the attractive allurements of Opossum Lake. There was the

man's advertisement; did he did not say that it was 'an uncommonly healthy place'—'within five minutes' walk of everything'—'finest fishing and shooting in the United States'—'comforts of a home and pleasures of a visit, &c.?' Surely, he ought to know the merits of his own possessions!

"'Opossum Lake?' repeated my father, 'why, I never heard of the place! Where is it? Half a day's journey from the city—humbug!'

"'I hope there are no misquitoses there,' observed Aunt Cornelia, who, during our summer migrations, made a regular practice of spending the nights, towel in hand, slaughtering her musical enemies.

"'Depend upon it, Aunt Cornelia,' exclaimed my brother George, 'that, when you *do* get a bite, you will lose more than you gain!'

"My father joined heartily in the laugh at his sister's expense, and they seemed to have forgotten all about Opossum Lake; but I was resolved that, if eloquence could win the day, it should be mine, and, at a fitting season, I again broached the subject.

"'Still harping upon that?' said my father, with a smile, 'what, in the name of all that's wonderful, ever put Opossum Lake into your head? It offers very few inducements to a young lady.'

"I went over the advertisement to see what I could find. I knew it all by heart—from the very beginning, to the 'apply by note, post-paid, to Zachary Grinder, at the Opossum Lake House.'

"'But why *did* you care so much about it?' I very naturally inquired.

"I expected to meet a friend there," replied Cousin Martha, in manifest confusion, "and I said that it must be so pleasant living near the water—and I should like to learn how to fish—and——"

"'Gammon!' exclaimed my eldest brother, 'you didn't think it so pleasant to live near the water last summer, when we went to Clam-Pasture—and as to fishing, why, you'd never have patience enough to catch anything!'

"The family were against me; but I replied mildly to all, and talked so reasonably that they began to think there might be something in it. My father was almost conquered.

"'And you are sure,' said George, 'that there is plenty of shooting, and all that sort of thing?'

"What would I not have said 'yes' to? I made Opossum Lake all things to all men; until each member of the family almost recognized, in my description, his or her own particular *beau-ideal* of an earthly Eden.

"The first step toward reaching the summit of our wishes was to inform Zachary Grinder of our coming, 'by note, *post-paid*,' as I impressed upon my father, while I stood leaning over his shoulder. 'But perhaps Mr. Grinder could not accommodate so many?'

"'Nonsense!' said my father, bluntly, 'I'll warrant you that he takes in all he can get—I only hope that we may not find it a take in in earnest!'

"The wish was heartily responded to by the others; and I could plainly read, in the eyes of those around me, that did the reality fall short of their expectations, why, *my* position would not be exactly an enviable one. But I was young and hopeful; I forgot that there would not be the same sun to gild Opossum Lake for them as for me; and, under my instructions, everything was prepared for a long sojourn.

"At length, we were fairly en route—feeling somewhat like travellers going to seek our fortune. George had his cherished gun—my eldest brother his fishing implements—and the rest of us some little bag, basket, or band-box, which is always detached from the main-land of baggage as too precious to be entrusted to common hands.

"The whole distance was to be 'half a day's journey.' At seven in the morning we entered the cars, and there were kept 'in durance vile' until twelve; we then found ourselves stranded upon a miserable hotel, where we stopped to dine; and, after various delays, we were packed, like so many bundles, in a rickety stage-coach, that bore on its side the magical letters 'Opossum Lake.' This vehicle must, at some former period of existence, have done penance as a snail; for crawling was evidently the only pace with which it was at all acquainted. When remonstrated with, the driver always replied that 'we were going up hill'—had the height of that undulation been at all in proportion to its length, it would have caused Mont Blanco and Chimborazo to tremble in their shoes. And yet, in spite of this cautious manner of proceeding, we were jolted about at a fearful rate; until, as my father observed, 'it was impossible to know whether we were in our place or not.'

"'Half a day's journey!' The hills were red with the fading sunset, when our ark came to a stand-still before a low, dilapidated house, with

a piazza around it; and, in my innocence, I at first imagined that this was only a sort of by-place to change horses. The countenances of the others were firm, and plainly said, 'don't tell *me* that *this* is Opossum Lake House—I will not believe it.' There was a stupid-looking man in shirt-sleeves on the piazza, who went in and shut the door, as though he expected to be robbed if he staid outside.

"We wondered that the driver did not go on; but he had now reached the coach-door, and looked smilingly inviting, as he said, 'Opossum Lake House, ladies and gentlemen.' True enough! there was blue water close to the house; and if we acted up to what was expected of us, our next movement was to get out.

"'I don't know,' said Aunt Cornelia, as she shivered at the cold breeze from the water, 'where the *healthiness* of the place is!'

"'Mattie! where are the snipes and part-ridges?' called out George.

"'You can scarcely expect,' said my father, kindly, as he noticed my embarrassed face, 'to find them hopping about the door, or sending forth stentorian invitations of come and kill us! Now, Mattie,' he whispered, 'you must introduce me to your friend, Mr. Grinder.'

"It would sound rather foolish to say that I was unacquainted with him, for had I not been extolling his merits for the last two weeks? Had I not represented him as the most disinterested host that ever presided at an inn, until it seemed almost an insult to offer any remuneration to so noble a character? All of which my father treasured up against me, and reminded me of it, in his quizzical way, much oftener than was agreeable.

"We opened the front door, and found ourselves, without the least warning, in an apartment that seemed already occupied by a stout, sun-browned man—a thin, freckled woman—the bashful individual in shirt-sleeves—and two overgrown girls—all drawn up in battle-ray against us.

"We felt like intruders, and were about to take our departure; when the sun-browned man introduced himself as Zachary Grinder, and signified that we could remain. We were their first boarders—they were not, therefore, exactly *au fait* at receptions. One by one the family vanished, and we were left alone with Zachary Grinder. My father made all necessary arrangements; and in a short time we found ourselves seated at a supper-table, where fish, of all shapes and sizes, seemed the only sort of food to be procured at Opossum Lake. We soon found that this was a peculiarity of the place. Every knife had a fishy

taste; the potatoes were all consumed for fish-cakes; and every man that we met was always going a fishing.

"Aunt Cornelia and I were domiciled in a room with a single window, that boasted neither shutter, blind, or shade of any description; and we were obliged to erect temporary screens of towels, dresses, or anything that came handy. Opossum Lake was destined to be a failure. As to its name, not a single opossum had ever been heard of within a hundred miles.

"I began to feel weary and lonely. The Misses Grinder, during the whole period of their residence upon this terrestrial planet, had never crossed the limits of the turnpike-gate—a distance of two miles—and they looked with considerable horror upon any farther excursions. My father and brothers had become interested in the fishing, which was the chief end and aim of an Opossum Lake existence, and determined to stay some time; but Aunt Cornelia absolutely refused to forgive me for bringing her there. Besides myriads of mosquitoes, there were perfect shoals of little gnats, who did even more execution, in their small way, than their larger brethren; and between them both we bid fair to be eaten up alive.

"Didn't I watch and wait for a letter? At last it came—Gerard would be there to-morrow. But I see that you look inquiring: I must go back a little.

"If ever there was perfection in man, it was to be found in Gerard Linfield. He was handsome, generous, and good-tempered to a fault; he was everything but—rich. My father did not encourage his visits, because of his poverty; and when we were at home, there was old Grandmother Corning, who always peeped through the blinds at every beau that came to see me."

"Did they not think such conduct very strange?" I asked.

"I don't know what they *thought*," replied Cousin Martha, "but they never said so. I had no mother; and grandmother appeared to consider it her duty to torment my life out in consequence. When we left, in the summer, she always went to some other relations; and right glad was I when the time came around.

"We lived in an old-fashioned house, that *then* had a large garden attached to it; and at one side of the house was a lane leading to an apple orchard, and there was our trysting-tree. Many a summer evening have I gone up to the old apple orchard, with my apron full of strawberries or peaches, and sat on the fence beside Gerard, while we regaled ourselves on the spoils. The beautiful moonbeams shone down on our faces,

and silvered the gnarled trunks of the apple trees, as we sat there undisturbed in our quiet retreat. Oh! those were beautiful days! To get away from the eagle eyes of Grandmother Corning, and stroll with Gerard around the orchard was all that I asked of happiness.

"In the rich, full light of the harvest moon, I came home, one night, with a strange, new feeling of responsibility and concealment. I had stood with Gerard under our favorite tree; and he had taken both my hands, and fixed his eyes upon mine, while I gave him a solemn promise that I would live for him and him only. Then, raising his eyes to heaven, he repeated the same promise to me; and we spoke not again until we parted at the lane.

"Oh, that well-remembered August night! Its events seem as those of yesterday. I can see it all: the orchard, and the old fence on which we sat—the rich moonlight, that bathed everything in a flood of silver—the tall figure, and noble face of Gerard Linfield—and the snowy folds of my white dress, as I stood leaning against the tree where I had sunk from intense emotion.

"I did not tell my father of our engagement—I *dared not*; I told no one; and our only chance of meeting was by stealth. Gerard was going to Opossum Lake—he had been sent there by his father to attend an old uncle; and I was now established there, waiting for his coming.

"How bright grew the prospect around at our first meeting! How delightful the faces of Zachary Grinder and his family! How charming our fny diet! My ennui had departed; I wandered by the shores of Opossum Lake, and thought the earth beautiful. There was *one* Gerard, and I was his beloved.

"I wonder that my father or brothers did not discover our secret. Aunt Cornelia never *was* very sharp, and now obstinately persisted in playing the hermit in her own room; but the others appeared to notice us no more than she did. It was well for us that they did not. How suddenly would everything have grown dull and cheerless without those evening walks! Gerard's old uncle would, doubtless, have been left 'alone in his glory;' and I should have exerted myself as much for our return home as I had previously done for our going.

"But we were betrayed at last, and in a most unexpected quarter. One of the Misses Grinder was detected, by her respectable father, walking in company with a gentleman of her own stamp, after the rest had retired. In answer to his reproach, she replied quite innocently, 'why, father, I thought it was all the fashion! The young lady from the city walks here with *her* beau.'

'The young lady from the city' was then handed over to condign punishment at the hands of *her* father.

"I shall never forget that evening. My father cross-questioned me until he had drawn from me an acknowledgment of our engagement, and then he expressly forbid any farther communication with Gerard Linfield. 'He had,' he said, 'higher views for me,' and was in the nearest approach to a rage that I had ever seen him exhibit.

"The summer passed over, and we returned home; Gerard Linfield was an officer, and he had been ordered off to Florida. We parted with tears and promises on both sides—I never saw him again."

"*Never saw him again!*" we exclaimed, "and yet you married?"

"Yes," replied Cousin Martha, with a sigh, "my father lost his property—and 'auld Robin Gray he cam' n-courtin' me.' Would that I had then refused the gold? for too late I found that I had accepted the dross?"

"What became of Gerard Linfield?" we asked.

"Oh, he is now a great man," said she, "he married a rich girl, and lives in a beautiful place up the North River. I wonder if he is happy?"

"Gerard Linfield?" repeated papa, who had just caught the name, "why, he is an old friend of mine—I see him frequently."

"How does he look?" asked Cousin Martha, in a tremulous voice, "does he seem old?"

"About fifty-five, I should say," replied papa, "he is a fine, hale, aristocratic-looking gentleman, and has one of the sunniest faces I have ever seen. Poor fellow! it was cloudy enough the other day—he has just lost his wife."

"Has he any family?" asked Cousin Martha, in a still lower tone.

"One only daughter—an elegant-looking girl, who has been reared in the very lap of luxury."

Cousin Martha sighed; and we felt deeply for her desolate condition.

PART II.

COUSIN MARTHA was again on a visit.

"I saw Gerard Linfield to-day," said papa, as he came in for the evening, "and he asked me if I knew of any one whom I could recommend as housekeeper and companion to his daughter."

The color rose brightly in Cousin Martha's usually pale cheek, as she looked eagerly up from her sewing.

"Would he have *me*, do you think?" she asked, in an almost inaudible tone.

We were quite provoked at papa. Instead of jumping instantly to the conclusion, as we had

done, he actually took time to consider before venturing a reply; and then answered slowly,

"I think that you would answer as well as any one I know of—but I would advise you to go as a perfect stranger."

That was just what she had intended; and we rejoiced not a little in the prospect of romance that was opening before us. What could be more natural than for two long-parted lovers to recognize each other through the lapse of thirty years, and renew the very feelings that had prompted their last farewell?

"Now," said papa, when we were alone, "don't fall to building any preposterous castles in the air; it is my private opinion that Cousin Martha will return exactly as she goes—you don't know Gerard Linfield as I do. He must be a remarkably easy man, indeed, who could fall in love with an old sweetheart of forty-seven, who had jilted him at seventeen."

"Oh, but she was obliged to do that," we replied, with a happy stroke of policy, "she could not disobey her father!"

Papa was somewhat staggered.

"Then she should not have married any one else," said he, with an effort at rallying.

"What, and left them all to starve?"

Papa abruptly left the circle, and soon after we heard the library door closed with a bang.

How suddenly we all became interested in Cousin Martha! That love passage of her youth proved the "open sesame" to our hearts; and we canvassed over the probable effect of her intended proceeding as though it were fraught with the greatest importance. The interval before her departure was spent with us; papa had spoken to Mr. Linfield about it, and the widower had agreed to the proposal without a suspicion that he was admitting beneath his roof no less a person than his first love.

Cousin Martha had been a very pretty girl; she still had large, blue eyes, and a fair skin, and her manner was particularly gentle—in whatever situation she might be placed, it was impossible not to recognize the lady. Papa was to conduct her to Blemetsville, Mr. Linfield's place—so named after his wife's family; and on the afternoon of her departure it was easy to see that she had taken unusual pains with her appearance. Who could blame her? Not we, surely, for we were as much interested in the denouement as he herself could be; and we noticed with pleasure the improvement which excitement had made in the usually quiet face of our protegee. The soft lace trimming that rested on her cheek set off its delicate glow; and there was a lustre in her eyes that few of us

had ever seen there before. We watched their departure from the windows; and then sat down to talk over Cousin Martha's prospects.

The travellers reached Albany in the morning, and then took the cars for Blemetsville. A princely-looking residence, with its white marble front in beautiful contrast with the dark trees around, was pointed out as the mansion of Mr. Linfield; and with trembling steps Cousin Martha advanced up the avenue. A flood of emotions almost overpowered her; and she kept her veil closely over her face, as though fearing a discovery. She had forgotten the mask which thirty years never fail to supply.

Up a flight of broad, marble steps—through the open door and immense hall—past the elegant drawing-rooms and oaken staircase—and the visitors are seated in the library. The thick veil is at length thrown back from a face nearly as white as the marble statuettes; and the trembling form in widow's weeds seems almost incapable of self-support.

A step sounds in the hall; not indeed the same that caused her girlish heart to bound with hope and love—but firmer, more deliberate. A tall, noble-looking man, whose appearance has all the perfection of early autumn, enters the room, and welcomes his friend with a warmth and courtesy that leave no doubt of his sincerity. He turns to Cousin Martha.

As that piercing eye rested upon her for a moment, it seemed reproaching her for the broken engagement; but other thoughts than these occupied the mind of Gerard Linfield. He saw in his first love, not the idol of his youth, but a lady-like, middle-aged woman, who had come to superintend his household, and enliven his daughter's solitude. Poor Cousin Martha! She saw the Gerard Linfield of other days adorned with all the graces of mature manhood; and again her heart fluttered under the spell of his presence.

How it sunk at his first words! cold—indifferent—the same that he would have given to any other stranger. The name, Mrs. Nesbitt, aroused no slumbering memories of the olden time; and Cousin Martha entered upon her duties in the house of Gerard Linfield without his in the least suspecting that in the far-off past they too had been so near to each other.

Clara Linfield was a slight, gentle-looking girl, whose petite style of beauty seemed only fit to be arrayed in robes of gossamer and cobweb texture; but she received Cousin Martha with a graceful kindness that won the widow's heart. Her housekeeping duties were but nominal ones; her time was spent in Clara's boudoir; and the

motherless girl leaned upon her new companion with all the confidence of a daughter.

Gerard Linfield loved his daughter with an affection little short of idolatry; his marriage had not proved a very happy one, and on the child was lavished all the affection that had been repulsed by the mother. Attracted at first by Mrs. Nesbitt's lady-like manner and gentle mien, he felt still more kindly disposed toward her on witnessing his daughter's evident partiality; and to Cousin Martha the days glided on at Blemetsville in a round of quiet happiness. She was under the same roof with Gerard Linfield; and vividly returned the memory of those days when the enjoyment of this privilege was all that she asked of the future. The lively, pleasure-loving youth was transformed into the quiet, intellectual man; and sometimes, in passing through the house, as she caught a glimpse of him in his library, busily at work with some heavy folio or learned manuscript, how she longed to place her hand on his shoulder and tell him all! But what could she say? "Behold the weak-minded girl who 'her vows forgot, her faith forswore'—who clouded your early youth with her falseness?" Would he not spurn such an acknowledgment? So Cousin Martha passed on with a sigh, and dwelt sadly on the picture of that proud, calm face, so absorbed with the books and scrolls.

Gerard Linfield sometimes remembered his early love—but the recollection was not a pleasant one. The anniversary of that night in the old apple orchard had been preserved through thirty long years; and as the day came around, he spent it in solitude and thoughts of the past.

"I wish," said Clara, one evening, when the two were seated in her pleasant dressing-room, "that I dared to ask a great favor of you."

Cousin Martha smiled. She wondered what "great favor" the young heiress desired of her.

"I cannot say, like Herod, 'to the half of my kingdom, it is thine'—but whatever lies in my power to do shall be most willingly done."

"Papa is 'very strange,'" said Clara, in a hurried, nervous manner, "you would suppose from his careless, off-hand way, that he never thought of wealth and such distinctions, and would as soon admit to his table a poor artist as a wealthy nobleman. But few know him as he really is; and I tremble to tell him that I love one whom he would consider in every way unworthy of me."

Cousin Martha was thinking of her own youth; and there was a softened tone in her voice, as she said,

"But how came you to lose your heart, ma petite?"

"I do not know," replied Clara, with downcast face, "unless it was because we see so little company here, and I became fond of rambling in the woods. Oh, but," she continued, as she looked up with a bright smile, "you have never seen Edward Clarence, or you would not ask that question."

Just so she had thought of Gerard.

"I am perfectly willing to be poor," continued Clara, enthusiastically, "I have no regretful feelings at the idea of leaving this grand house for an humble cottage, except that papa would not go with me; I shrink not at the thought of waiting upon myself—for shall I not have *him* to wait upon also? I *know* that we could be 'passing rich with forty pounds a year'—why, then, will not papa let me be happy in my own way? I am afraid, though," she added, with a merry laugh, "that he will consider me some foundling unworthy of the noble blood of Linfield—else why do I have such plebeian thoughts?"

It was strange to hear the young mistress of that splendid establishment talk of the grim tyrant, poverty, as though it were some plaything to make merry with; but poor, innocent-minded Clara had no more idea of its true meaning than had Marie Antoinette and her companions, when they threw off the cares of state, and disguised themselves as humble villagers. It was a something that would compel her to wear a fascinating little straw bonnet and white dress, and look a perfect divinity while presiding at the meal of strawberries and cream—nothing more.

She sat smiling to herself at the pleasant visions she had conjured up; and her companion could not help thinking it a pity that so lovely a creature should select a life of toil and mortification. But how had it been with herself? Was she not rightly punished by finding the gold she had grasped, like that in the fairy tale, turned to withered leaves in her hand? And would it not now have been better, even in a worldly sense, had she married Gerard Linfield? These thoughts prevented her from remonstrating with the young heiress, and she listened to her confession in silence.

"I think," said Clara, timidly, "that papa likes you very much; he says that you are *soothing*, because you are so gentle and lady-like; and if you do not mind it at all, I thought that he would not be so angry to hear it from you, first, as he might be from me—at any rate, he would not scold you."

Cousin Martha had expected this from the first; Clara was a timid, nervous little creature, and it was quite amusing to witness her embar-

arrassment and equivocations. It was rather an awkward affair to plead his daughter's cause with her first love; it might arouse memories of the time when *he* stood in the position of Edward Clarence; and was she quite sure that she could trust herself? Could she refrain from falling at his feet, and suing for his forgiveness? But she had promised Clara, and she now collected all her firmness for the interview.

"I shall stay up waiting for you," said the trembling girl, "and on the first glance at your face, I can tell whether you have succeeded."

She covered her face with her hands, and sank down in the farthest depths of the great arm-chair, as the door closed after her companion.

Gerard Linfield was in his library thinking of the August moon that, thirty years ago, had shone down upon those early vows—when, in answer to his permission to enter, Mrs. Nesbitt stood before him. He rose politely and handed her a chair, into which she sank, scarcely able to speak. He was surprised at her emotion; and, fearful that something had happened to Clara, begged her to put an end to his suspense as quickly as possible.

"It is of her that I would speak," said Cousin Martha, in a tremulous tone, "she is perfectly well, but she requested me to speak to you upon a subject that she dared not mention herself."

She then repeated all that Clara had told her; and as she proceeded, Gerard Linfield's brow contracted, and his lips were compressed ominously. How had he himself been treated when he stood in the place of this young adventurer? Was *he* now to reap the benefit of those years of toil that had followed his own disappointment, and revel in the wealth which had failed to console *him* for the loss of his early love? He turned almost fiercely to the trembling visitor; but as she stood there, with bowed head and clasped hands, he thought of the young, Madonna-like figure radiant in the pale moonlight. Just so had *she* stood on that summer evening—and a fancied likeness between the two rose suddenly to his mind. Had he gazed thus much longer he would have known all; for it was only by the greatest self-control that the erring one refrained.

He judged his daughter by his own feelings in early days, and his voice was softened as he said,

"You tell me that he is poor, and unknown?"

Cousin Martha bowed assent.

"An artist?" he repeated, with a half smile, "perhaps his only work is Clara's portrait traced upon his heart, and 'warranted not to fade.'"

Mrs. Nesbitt turned to go. She had pleaded the cause of the lovers to the best of her ability, and she felt that it was dangerous to remain longer.

"Will you have the kindness to send my daughter to me?" asked Mr. Linfield.

With a glad heart she hastened back, for she felt sure that all would go right.

"I know that you have succeeded!" exclaimed Clara, joyfully, as she threw her arms around her friend's neck, "how can I ever thank you?"

She entered her father's presence with a wildly beating heart, and it was a long time before she reappeared; but when she returned to the dressing-room, there was a bright smile on her face that seemed struggling with the tears in her eyes.

The father, indeed, had not quite told her that they might marry as soon as they pleased, for he had never seen the young gentleman; but he *had* said that, if, upon acquaintance, he proved to be the paragon that Clara had represented him, why—"then he would think about it." Was not this just as encouraging as though he had given his consent at once? Clara rattled on in the wildest spirits; and Cousin Martha was made acquainted with the exact color of Edward Clarence's hair and eyes, and also knew that he had a dimple in his chin.

The very next day saw the lover installed at the dinner-table; and having borne, with the most stoical fortitude, an immense quantity of eye-shot from the anxious father, he was admitted at once to his good graces; and from thenceforth until the marriage Edward Clarence was the privileged *l'ami de la maison*.

The lovers were impatient—Mrs. Nesbitt interceded—and Gerard Linfield acknowledged, with a sigh, that it was the destiny of daughters to get married. On the wedding day, he placed in Clara's hands a paper which must have sadly annoyed her, for it effectually destroyed her pleasant little visions of love in a cottage. They must go to Italy; the artist to study—Clara to watch him; and soon in that great house there were only left the lovers of olden time, and the servants.

Gerard was beginning to feel very lonely; his evenings were now spent entirely with Mrs. Nesbitt, and her gentle ease of manner acted upon him like a soothing spell. He sat looking at her, one evening, and made the discovery that she must once have been remarkably beautiful. Then he thought that she had not lost those charms, even now; and the large, dreamy eyes reminded him of his first love.

He had been working himself up to it for some time; and at last it came.

"I have been thinking," said he, as he suddenly leaned across the table, and seized Cousin Martha's hand, "that Blemetsville has seemed

more attractive, more *home-like* since your sojourn among us, and your kindness to Clara has made a deep impression upon me. To this has lately been added a warmer feeling—prompted entirely by my own heart. We are both of us too old for lovers' raptures and kneeling vows—but if you will consent *always* to cheer my loneliness, I shall feel that no earthly happiness is left for me to wish."

Before he could prevent her she was kneeling at his feet.

"It is not too late for *me* to kneel," she exclaimed, with tearful eyes, "oh, Gérard! how deeply do I feel my utter unworthiness of that heart which I have now twice won! And when I confess that I am that false one who plighted to you her early love, there will be no need of my declining what you will then withdraw in contempt."

Gerard was fearfully agitated.

"Is it possible," said he, "that, after the lapse of thirty years, we meet thus! *Mattie!* I had resolved *never* to forgive you—the sting of the deep wrong you did me, years ago, rankles here yet."

"I do not extenuate my offence," she replied, with a meek sadness, "I do not deserve your forgiveness. Perhaps, if you knew *all*, you would not judge me so severely—but it is best as it is. I will never trouble you again with a sight that must be hateful to you."

Gerard Linfield held her hand, and gazed half dreamily upon her still fair face.

"I should never have known you," said he, "you do not look at all as you did then; even your manner is altered—subdued. We are both very lonely, and I now woo you as 'Mrs. Nesbitt'—leaving that naughty *Mattie* to the punishment of her own conscience. After all, it is only the fulfilment of those vows made in the old apple orchard."

"Let me go, Gerard!" said Cousin Martha, faintly, "I could never forgive myself for thus taking advantage of your present feelings—feelings that *must* change to indifference or contempt. You will say," said she, with a still warmer flush upon her face, "that I came here for this result—I knew that you were Gerard Linfield."

"*Mattie*," said he, as he bent those deep, earnest eyes upon her excited face, "I freely forgive your offence, for I believe that you have suffered more than I have. And did I believe that you had indeed come here for the express purpose of making this confession, and renewing the old love, *that*, of itself, would be sufficient atonement."

Were we not right, then, after all? And did we not triumph over papa on account of our superior wisdom and foresight? Until, aggravated beyond all endurance by the din we raised about his ears, he actually wished us, one and all, the fate of Cousin Martha!

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MY FIRST ATTEMPT AT SCHOOL KEEPING.

BY JEREMY BOGGS.

I.

"WHERE," said my friend, cheerfully, "is your 'skewl 'ous,' as they call it in these parts? Now keep a stiff upper lip, and mind, boy, don't pay too much attention to the girls! This road turns off to C——. So good-bye, Billy"—and he grasped me warmly by the hand and laughed, and winked, and started his horse into a brisk trot homeward.

We had been playmates in our younger days, and were now at college together. It was our long vacation. He proposed to spend it pleasantly among the winter festivities of C——, while I, being less fortunately situated in life, was driven to school teaching to defray my college bills. Learning my intention, nothing would satisfy my friend but to drive me out to the "deestriet" which had been kind enough to place the tutelage of its rising youth in my inexperienced hands. He *had* driven me out, had heard me undergo an examination before the portentous "committee," (during which he adroitly telegraphed the answers to some mathematical posers, upon which elsewhere I might have blundered) had seen me installed into my boarding-house, had spent the night with me in a most tumultuous manner, and had now after carrying me half way to the "skewl 'ous," bidden me farewell, and left me standing desolate—for the first time in my life without a friend or adviser. I stood still, watching his receding carriage till it was lost from view in a valley. The smile which I had conjured up at his departure had disappeared, and I felt my boasted courage, like Bob Acres', oozing out at the fingers' ends! I wrapped my cloak tighter about me and strode off through the mud and chilling sleet toward the scene of my future joys and sorrows—mainly sorrows, as a foreboding told me.

The school-house was one of those dingy, scrambling structures, which, notwithstanding the much-talked-of "march of intellect," are to be found, at this day, in the rural parts of upper New England. It was built of wood, one story high, and was possessed of a low, narrow doorway, and small windows. What rendered it more unsightly, though it must be owned more comfortable, were sundry patches among the clapboards and shingles, and a few fresh bricks in

the black and tottering chimney. These repairs, it seems, were fitfully made every year by the proper authorities, to cover up such ravages as were inflicted by time and roguish boys on the venerable edifice. To complete the promising appearance of this "popular institution of learning," (as it was playfully styled by the state superintendent in his annual report) it was perched upon a rock, upon the highest point of ground thereabouts; and, by consequence, exposed to the full sweep of our keen northern winds.

At the door of the school-house stood a group of boys and girls, staring anxiously at their future instructor as he approached. They were of various sizes and ages. Among the motley mass, one half of which was made up of little swathed morsels of humanity just escaped from their nurses, I was glad to see several young ladies between the years apparently of fourteen and eighteen, (I was just turned of the latter) but, on the other hand, I marked with feelings of decided apprehension a half dozen raw, shaggy fellows considerably my seniors, and teeming with the strength of their favorite bullocks. I had now reached the expectant theory. I gathered myself up with a good deal of dignity, (as I thought became my calling) adjusted my hat, (it was my first hat—bought to convey a semblance of maturity) bade my future pupils a benignant good morning, and walked with a most majestic air into the school-house. As I passed through the little flock, I caught the eye of one person, under whose gaze I am conscious of wincing. I was instinctively assured that my evil genius stood before me. He was six feet and some odd inches high, well proportioned across the shoulders, and obviously entitled to all the privileges and responsibilities which attach to legal manhood. His garments, though made of homespun, had a smack of the rakish about them, which ill accorded with the traditional simplicity of country life. His coat was long waisted; his trowsers profuse over his cowhide boots; his vest expansive and rolling. The same passing glance which communicated these facts, further revealed a huge brass seal dependent from his fob; a bright red and yellow neckcloth, and a visorless fur cap, which he wore jauntingly.

"He is addicted to occasional trips into town," I said to myself, "and is probably the leader of *la jeunesse dorée* in this region." His grey eyes just then rested on mine with a mocking leer. It brought my youth and presumption home to me with a shiver. He couldn't have expressed himself more clearly in words—indeed, it added nothing to my emotion to hear, as I was entering the door, in a voice which I knew from its roundness must be his—"pooh, he's nothing but a monkey!"

The scholars came trooping after, all but my mysterious foe, (for such I at once regarded him) whose name, I may as well inform the reader now as ever, was Zerrubabel Jones. When the scrambling for seats was over, he stalked in very leisurely, loitered by the stove, and walked to a desk which had been left vacant for him in the back part of the room, evidently out of respect to his prowess and attainments. Here he condescendingly seated himself, and surveyed from his high position (for the floor ran back at a formidable angle) the crop of heads before him, ending his inspection by another curious leer at me. He seemed to my nervous imagination to consider the pupils as his own property, and had he risen and entered a protest against my occupancy of the throne as an usurpation, I believe I should have waived it on the spot. I really felt that I was acting under his permission and patronage—which proved essentially to be the case.

I know that the idea affected me unpleasantly during the delivery of my opening speech. For I had deemed it proper to define my position in the parliamentary form, and had written out and learned a neat little address, elucidating the "vital importance of education," and so forth. Among other topics, I laid stress on the necessity of good order, and cited, by way of illustration, the case of an army which is effectual only when it is well disciplined. This I conceived to be a strong point, and, in humble imitation of more practised speakers, I paused, and swept my eye over my mimic senate, in the course of which impressive act I again met the sinister gaze of Zerrubabel, and was again abashed.

The rest of the forenoon was spent in assorting the heap of intellect before me into lots for handling. Precisely at twelve o'clock, I took down my fine silver watch, which I had hung against the wall for effect, and with a preliminary flourish of my knuckles upon the desk, (for I had a notion that rapping was part of a pedagogue's business, and couldn't come in amiss) declared the school adjourned till afternoon.

On the way home, I found myself side by side

with one of my pupils—a very tidy, sweet lass of about my own age. As it was my duty *ex officio* to know my scholars, it struck me as quite correct to draw this interesting charge into conversation. "For," I argued to myself, "my responsibilities do not end with the school-room." So I dropped a remark about the weather, which had luckily cleared up. She turned her fresh face toward me, and smiled as she answered, "yes." I felt more than ever the pride of my vocation, and went on, in a high and mighty style, to expatiate over the philosophy of clouds and storms. To all of which, when I had brought the discourse with a splendid sweep down to the mud at our feet, she responded "yes." It was a simple word—one that might naturally be expected from anybody. But from her it signified more than a passive assent. Her tone indicated that she entered sympathetically into the feelings of wonder and admiration which I confessed for those ingenious provisions of nature, the clouds and storms aforesaid. I proceeded still further in the discharge of my exalted office, and started a disquisition on the component parts of the four elements, in which I was getting along swimmingly, when my fair pupil interrupted me with, "here's our house, sir."

How sweetly she spoke it. And her light blue eyes! how they tickled my heart. Yes, my heart. For as she placed her hand upon the latch of the paternal dwelling, (a one story red) I barely checked myself in the act of touching my new hat—forgetful of our relations!

II.

REGARDING school keeping as altogether an artificial employment, I studiously endeavored to make myself as unlike myself as possible. Being young, I strained to appear old. Holding with the poet, that "'tis well to have a merry heart, however short we stay," I deliberately stifled the rising laugh, and smiled only as kings smile upon great occasions, and even then in a melancholy, anti-mundane fashion. Some of my devices were singular enough. I affected, I remember, a heavy bass voice. I had, it is true, survived that pleasant era, when one's notes are subject to capricious oscillations through two or three octaves. Still my voice was not what is technically known as "deep," and depth being popularly accepted as an index of years, I thought best to deepen it by a forced process. I was perpetually talking in a growl. I flattered myself that this deceit was successful, till Mrs. Smart, the kind matron at my boarding-place, asked me one day why I didn't get rid of my cold, and offered to prepare an infallible poultice for it, which treatment I

declined in great confusion. As it was, the habit nearly threw me into a bronchitis. I pretended to be weak-sighted, though my eyes were the best in the world. In a hunting party, which we had at college, I shot more "*greys*," with a rifle, than any other man, and in five cases out of ten drove the ball through the head or shoulders. Yet, it is notorious, I reasoned, that all hard students are weak-sighted. What right have I to be teaching others with these tell-tale witnesses of my own incapacity about me? So I blinked and winked all day long, and wore an ugly shade across my forehead to keep out the candle-light; and condemned, in common with Grandmother Hodgkins, the oldest inhabitant of the district, the vile latter-day practice of printing in small type. My talk with the farmers was exclusively upon agriculture and kindred topics. I sustained it with a good smattering of terms; for my knowledge of which I stood indebted to the "Fiddletown Farmer," and an old copy of the Patent Reports. The science of pigs I delighted in, and used to stand admiringly by the pen while the monsters were being fed. As for horses, to which I had an aversion from youth, being always apprehensive of furtive kicks in the ribs; I so far mastered my prejudices as to harness a pair one day for Farmer Smart. How I ever performed the feat is a wonder, yet I got through it with only one mistake—a simple one—that of putting on the harness wrong side up. But I excused myself on the score of defective vision. Cattle, I may say, I adored. A casual observer would have pronounced cattle my *grand passion*; I have stood a half an hour at a stretch in the barn-yard, with my boots buried ankle deep in its succulent strata, patting huge oxen on the back, punching their ribs, judging on their thickness of fat, and beating my brains to guess at their gross weight. I found it wise policy to guess high, it flattered the owner. My conjectures ranged, I believe, between two and three hundred pounds above. I have reason to think that, after all, Farmer Smart doubted my pretensions. One morning he brought home a bull, and I marched out highly elated to look at the animal. "Ha," I cried, as the brute went past me tossing his head, "some Devonshire in that fellow." I said it on the strength of a picture in the last year's Almanac, between which and the bull I fancied I traced signs of resemblance. "Devonshire, pooh! not a particle of Devonshire blood in him. He's half Durham," and Farmer Smart proceeded to expound the difference between the two varieties, "*which was*," he said, "*as plain as the nose on a man's face.*" This, of course, meant me. I did not attempt a reply.

Among the scholars I was dignified. I never conversed with them, in or out of school, in an ordinary colloquial style. My aim was on all occasions to astound. Even to the charming Nancy Potter (whom I have already introduced) I never unbent. But I always felt like unbending though, and prattling to the pretty innocent about love—for naturally, dear reader, I was the jolliest and most romantic youngster in all C——.

How I used to hover about her in school time, of course in the discharge of some professional duty. The writing days, which to most teachers are an insufferable nuisance, were to me seasons of refined delight. Nancy had contracted a shocking scrawl from former instructors, and I took upon myself the task of making it straight. This imposed, obviously, the necessity of sitting along side of her in her little, narrow seat, and superintending the business personally. How could she be expected to make straight marks without properly holding her pen; and who so competent as I to adjust these plump little fingers upon it? And that soft, round arm—how *could* she write decently, holding it out at such an awkward angle—and wasn't it my bounden duty to press it gently into the proper place? And what more natural transition, than looking up from her homely "I's" to the beautiful eyes in her dear little head, and contrasting the clumsy curves of her "g's" and "q's" with the graceful flow of her soft brown hair?

But when I was thus engaged, I always found Zerrubabel staring at me more maliciously than ever—which was not at all strange, as he was suspected, in rural phrase of "shining up to Nancy." Indeed, from the beginning, just as I had expected, he proved himself my enemy. He evinced his hostility in a peculiar way. *He* didn't upset the stove, nor clog up the chimney, nor pile the desks in the middle of the room, and crown the pyramid with a scare-crow figure, holding a book in its dexterous hand, designed to typify myself—though I would not say that Zerrubabel strenuously opposed the commission of these flagrant offences. Still *he* never came into a direct collision with me. Though persisting and determined, he was sly and quiet in his malice. For example, I had not filled my position two days, before he came in with a "standing collar;" (he never wore one before) at least one inch taller than mine, which was itself an extravagant sample. This created a general tittering in the school. The collar was made of foolscap, and its cut and dimensions as well as its material betrayed an obvious design to caricature. But as Zerrubabel wore it in apparent good faith, I

really had no right to take umbrage thereat. Whether I was not deterred by a consciousness of physical inability to support my protest—deponent saith not. I was sorely vexed when, on repeated occasions, my tormentor gravely fondled and pulled up this part of his attire; or, what was worse, deliberately turned down one division of it, stretched out his neck and expectorated over it. He travestied my watch, which, I have said, I was accustomed to hang up with no little ostentation above my desk. What was my astonishment one day to see Zerrubabel pull forth an enormous turnip-shaped chronometer, and suspend it, with an important air, on a nail in the wall behind him. Yet while everybody else (me excepted) was laughing, he kept as sober as a church deacon. What could I do? Again, I had a hair ring—a gift from a pretty cousin of mine. I was proud of it, and, to pique Nancy's curiosity, used to parade the hand that bore it oftener than was actually required. Now, what should the relentless Zerrubabel do but manufacture two rings of horse hair—the braid an inch wide at least—and wear one on the middle finger of each of his great lobtser hands! And, to heighten the indignity, gaze at them now and then and sigh. He further found a savage enjoyment in bringing me the toughest and most impracticable sums in arithmetic and algebra; and, with a view of puzzling me, ransacked the entire district for recondite books. It would never answer to decline the task—and an awful task it was, keeping me up half the night for weeks together. In short, never was poor pedagogue, on thirteen dollars per month *and* found, so punished as I with Zerrubabel. There were, to be sure, other vicious scholars. These were Tom Titcomb, Dan Arlin, and Bill Swipes, who were engaged in some of the grosser freaks I have already mentioned; but I soon quieted their insubordination by threatening an instant dismissal. In this the committee would have borne me out. But Zerrubabel was intangible, and I must needs endure him. At one time I thought of conciliating my annoyer, but pride forbade. I had thus far reposed on my dignity. It would be weakness now to relent.

But Zerrubabel did not confine the exercise of his eccentric talents to the school room. He was all abroad with them as I soon learned.

In commencing my labors, I had deemed it wise policy, like most other beginners, to find fault with the reigning order of things. This mania for innovation was specially directed against "reading books," which were, as I remarked to the committee, "behind the spirit of the age." The committee coincided with my

suggestion, and procured a new set, the chief merit of which lay, as I pointed out, in instructions for developing the lungs; and I dilated upon the importance of this long-neglected branch of education, and assured the committee, that, with practice, every male ragamuffin in the district might become a Demosthenes or Cicero at least. The books were of different sizes and adapted to various classes—but, in one respect, they agreed. They all contained simple formulas—as "ba, be, bi, bo, bum"—the repetition of which, three times a day, under some modifications and restrictions, would, as the prefaces all promised, "communicate strength to the lungs, and give that tone to the voice which is the first requirement in an accomplished orator." For the sake of my own ease, tried to render the performance more agreeable to my pupils, I drilled them all together in the "ba, be, bi's," &c. In the outset, I succeeded in extorting little more than a whisper from the future Demostheneses. But by dint of encouragement and practice, they climbed from one pitch to another, till at last, when fresh-winded, it seemed as if they would tear the roof off. I plumed myself on the triumph of this experiment, and looked forward with delight to the closing day of the school; when the assembled parents should listen, in speechless joy and wonder, to the trumpet tones of their oratorical offspring.

As I was walking toward the school-house, one cold, blustering morning, I was met by a horse drawing a small sleigh, with a large man bundled up in it. This individual—that is the man—who looked preternaturally immense in a buffalo coat, reined in his steed and accosted me with,

"Hallo, mister, do yew keep skewl down thar?" jerking his whip over his shoulder toward the school-house.

"Yes, sir," I replied, trying to assume an old look.

"Well, sir, they tell me yew have some new fangled notions abeaout teachin', and how yeoure injurin' the childrens' health with makin' 'em yell, like all possessed. My boy Ezekiel caught a bad cold from it. And now look 'ere, mister, my names Puffer, and I 'aint agoin' to have any more such donis with my family." Upon which Mr. Puffer shook his head in the most incontrovertible manner.

"But, my dear sir," I exclaimed, somewhat alarmed at this unexpected turn of affairs, "my dear sir, I hardly think that Ezekiel contracted his cold under my instructions. I saw him, the other day, running backward and forward through a puddle of water, and called him away from it. It is most probable——"

"Do you mean to tell me I lie, sir!" broke in Mr. Puffer, glaring ferociously on me.

"By no means, sir—but——"

"But! yew cant pull the wool over old Puffer, and I want ye to know it for sertain. I've hearn tell abeaout ye; and if yew don't leave, Zeke shall—that's flat. Ge-e-et alang," and Mr. Puffer cracked up his horse and abandoned me to my reflections, which were none of the pleasantest.

On the afternoon of the same day, returning from school, I was hailed by Farmer Lubbett with a similar accusation. When I attempted to explain, he fended me off with—"yew can't make me believe that screechin' all day long won't bring on a cough!"—and I left the indignant father in despair of converting him.

Others took up the cry, and the result was, that four of the most respectable families in the district withdrew their children from my control. The committee, however, having consented to purchase the odious "readers," naturally considered their own reputation at stake, and sided with me. This checked the progress of disaffection, and I continued my vocal exercises as before—but I was aware of having made a small party of enemies. So that my position was not at all to be envied.

And this misfortune I traced to the quiet suggestions of Zerrubabel!

III.

It will be understood that I was not in love with Nancy. I merely "liked" her in an enlarged sense of the word. It is quite probable that had I not been weighed down with the panoply of a pedagogue, (I made it heavy) I should have "waited on her" after the most approved methods, and have gone into such little extravagancies of gallantry, as characterize youth of a susceptible temperament. But I contented myself with nothing more than an assiduous attention to her educational advancement, (especially her chirography, which rapidly improved under my supervision) and to walk with her to and from school whenever a fair opportunity offered—on which occasions I prated not of love but of learning. Still I was generally regarded as not wholly insensible to her charms. As for Nancy herself, I doubted, latterly, whether she returned even my "liking"—indeed I had reason to suspect that she was not altogether indifferent to the Herculean attractions of Zerrubabel.

It was now the fifth week of my term, and the first set party of the season was announced to come off at Squire Cummings'—why called "Squire" I never *could* learn—to which party I was invited. Hitherto, in pursuance of my

dignified policy, I had not paid a single visit in the neighborhood. This invitation I could not well decline. Nancy, being the reigning belle, was of course on the list of guests. I, therefore, made an early proposal to "call" for her, and she accepted the proffer of my company.

The appointed evening came round, and, after taking the fiftieth look in the glass, to make sure that all was right even to the angle of my collar, I sallied forth on foot. The air was just keen enough to be bracing, and the moon never shone with a softer light. It rested mildly, I thought, on the roof of the "one story red," at the door of which I gave a lively, double knock. It was answered by Nancy. She was all accoutred, and looked exceedingly pretty and impudent beneath a great thick hood. The appendage was itself ugly enough; (it belonged to her grandmother) but I am persuaded that her ruddy face and laughing blue eyes would have taken the obloquy out of the most hideous creation of the mantuamakers—not excepting the antiquated "calash."

I tucked Nancy's arm under my own, ('twas indispensable—the road was *so* slippery) and we started for the Squire's. As we went crackling over the hard-beaten snow, I felt that my "liking" was gradually giving way before something of a less philosophic nature; and on that very short journey I discoursed of nothing more abstruse than the moon, and limited myself, even then, to its obvious beauties! In fact, I was growing pathetic about it, and don't know whither my tenderness might have led, had not Nancy called me from the region of enchantment with the simple remark, "we're at the Squire's." I summoned up my vanishing stock of dignity, and we entered.

We found a large party already convened in the hospitable parlor. Zerrubabel, I observed with satisfaction, was not present. But while Nancy and I were toasting ourselves by the huge wood fire, Zarrubabel came—and *alone*. This called out a vast amount of sly bantering, most of which, I was positive, was directed at me. We nodded to each other—and he bade Nancy good evening. The slightest possible smile lurked on his lip; and I am not quite sure that the little mink didn't wink at him. I know that the suspicion plagued me, and I dwelt upon it some time among the coals. Presently raising my head, I noticed that Nancy had slipped away, and was chatting briskly with a knot of school girls at the farther end of the room. Among them ominously loomed the stout form of Zerrubabel. I buried my chagrin in a conversation with Squire Cummings, who was a fine, stupid, hearty old fellow, always insisting on the

"practical." So, in deference to his hobby, I launched out upon that pre-eminently practical theme—*oxen*. I was in the midst of a description of the prize ox "Columbus," (over which the Squire was licking his lips) when somebody cried out, "forfeits! forfeits!" "Yes, forfeits, let's have a game of forfeits," answered twenty voices. After considerable rushing and tumbling, a circle was formed in the middle of the room. But no one asked me to enter it. My claims to dignity were at last fully recognized! I, who played forfeits charmingly, was doomed to sit in the chimney corner with the venerable Cummings and talk of—*oxen*!

But while I talked, my eyes were on the gay circle, and especially on an important component of it—Nancy—who was seated in an alarming contiguity to Zerrubabel. The kissing went on briskly, while my poor narrative lagged. By-and-bye the latter stopped short—what were *oxen* to the scene before me? There was Zerrubabel "measuring off tape" (a diabolical refinement in the art of osculation) with Nancy, who not only *endured* the penalty, but took it with a confoundedly keen relish! As for Zerrubabel, he performed his part of the business like one who was used to it; and as he twirled off yard after yard, looked triumphantly over Nancy's white shoulders at me in the chimney corner. One—two—three—four—five—slow and full—and so on to *fifteen*, when they ceased—reluctantly, it was plain to see. Oh, how I itched to throw my dignity to the dogs, leap into the charmed circle and run a muck at kissing like a Malay.

"And heaoww much did he give?" asked the Squire.

It was lucky that he recalled me at this crisis, or I might have done something rash!

Presently, but not till after Nancy had been again punished, oh, horrors! through the back of a chair—still by Zerrubabel—the circle was dissolved, and I breathed easier. Mrs. Squire Cummings, a fat, matronly soul, now announced a "bite of suthin' to eat in the kitchen." The party formed into pairs and marched to the repast—Zerrubabel and Nancy leading the van!

The Squire and I closed up the procession. The "bite" proved to be a sumptuous array of pumpkin pies, dough-nuts, sweet cakes, home-made apple-sauce, (the daintiest of preserves) hard cider, and hot coffee. I could eat nothing. Nancy, on the contrary, committed fearful onslaughts among the viands—Zerrubabel plying her all the while with a tenderness that was very affecting! I felt an uneasy sensation in the throat, and was glad to get back to the parlor in the chimney corner, with the Squire and his eternal *oxen*.

The company soon broke up. It was my business, of course, to return Nancy to the paternal roof. My dignity had kept me on tenter hooks all the evening, and I was determined to discard it—at least to Nancy—on the way back. I rose to seek her, when the Squire grasped me by the arm. He had a little anecdote to tell about an old steer of his. It would take but a moment. The Squire was urgent, and as I had done more than my share of the talking—how could I refuse? It turned out to be his favorite story, which he always reserved for the climax! I bore it for ten dreary, agonizing minutes—then peremptorily excused myself, and made a mad plunge for Nancy. She was missing—Zerrubabel *had gone home with her*!

The blow was too much for me. To be jilted under the mildest circumstances is awkward enough. But I was a man in authority—and had been rejected by one of my own pupils. It was insupportable, I knew it was the standing topic for discussion throughout the district. Hints and innuendoes were not to be misunderstood, and I saw no end of them. So the third day after this unhappy adventure, I was attacked by a severe headache which grew rapidly worse, and forced me to give up the school.

Next winter I tried pedagoging again in a region remote from the scene of my mishap. I pursued a different plan. I laid aside my dignity, sympathized with the sports as well as the studies of my scholars—didn't talk mightily—visited at large—and "though I say it as I shouldn't," won the reputation of being the best teacher in the whole country!

THE HERMIT'S REVENGE.

BY R. H. BROWN.

IN the middle of Hatfield Chase, many years ago, stood the remains of an ancient Hermitage, formed out of a vast rock. An altar of hewn stone appeared at the eastern extremity of the cell, and a free-stone slab covered what was designated the Hermit's Cave at the west end. From the centre of the floor a spring of clear water had its source, and flowed through a fissure in the rock-bound wall, falling with a musical sound over the shelving stone without; from thence it took a winding course over the Chase. The solitary habitant of this gloomy hermitage was called William of Lindholme, and was as remarkable for his severe monastic discipline as for his rigid adherence to seclusion. Seldom was he visited by the neighboring people. On a marriage celebration, however, a visit to the priest was deemed indispensable. The bridegroom invariably on the morning of wedlock led his fair bride to the Hermitage, to drink water from the "Well of Happiness"—as the priest was supposed to have endowed the stream with divine excellencies—and to receive the blessing of William of Lindholme.

Three miles north of Hatfield lies the rustic town of Thornes. At the time to which our legend refers, an old baronial hall stood in this vicinity, belonging to the Loveleigh family. The wars of the Roses had scattered and decreased the numbers, and leveled much of the grandeur of these possessors, and now, the only representative of the family was a young man who had been restored to part of his paternal-estates, along with the titled dignity of his ancestors.

One autumnal evening, returning from hunting, accompanied by a number of his friends and retainers, Sir Walter Loveleigh had occasion to pass by the dwelling of the priest. The measured tones of the bell had but just ceased, by which the hunting party knew that the devoted man had commenced his vesper duties. Sir Walter ordered his men to halt at the threshold of the cell, and driving his spear against the rough oaken door, demanded speech with the hermit. No attention being paid to various summons, he applied the head of his hunting-spear to the greensward, cut out a square piece of turf, which he gathered carefully into his hands, and with it filled the hole through which

the stream flowed from the interior of the cell. He waited the result with pleased complacency. Presently the waters inundated the cave, and the priest was heard inside, drawing the huge fastenings of the door with an impatient hand. Through the gloomy doorway stalked the tall figure of the monk, his face betokening a consciousness of unprovoked wrong. He fixed his large black eyes upon Sir Walter Loveleigh, uttering at the same time a malediction on his untimely sport. He then released the waters from their troubled hold, and with a look of rage re-entered his dwelling-place. As Sir Walter vaulted lightly into his saddle, he shouted aloud to the priest:

"I have heard thy much-vaunted waters designated the 'waters of happiness;' methinks they may henceforth be better recognized as the troubled waters of Hatfield Chase."

The hunters moved away, the waters flowed peaceably as before, and the priest closed the door of his dismal abode, to resume his vesper duties.

Years passed. There was revelry in the halls of Sir Walter Loveleigh, for that day he had brought a bride, to add fresh lustre to the home of his fathers. The noble friends of the happy pair were gathered in all their glittering array; knights and ladies, retainers and serving-men. Many were the sports that were to be performed in honor of the day; and every face beamed with becoming hilarity while anticipating the scene before them.

One ceremony, however, was still to be effected to make perfect the harmony of the present occasion. The usual visit to the abode of the hermit was yet to be performed. Sir Walter had forgotten his prank years before, and now he and the fair Rosa, with a gay cavalcade, proceeded without delay to the Hermitage. William of Lindholme received them in silence; proceeded to the extremity of the vaulted dwelling, and from its dark recesses produced a large drinking horn, and applying it where the stream fell into an artificial basin of the rock, he gave it into the hands of the lady, filled with water. Rosa drank freely of the contents, and then gave the drinking-cup into the hands of Sir Walter. The vessel being partially emptied, the priest commanded

them to kneel. Supposing he was about to invoke a blessing on their heads, the bridal pair immediately complied.

"The insults and injuries that we treasure never grow too old for retribution," spoke the monk, in a deep sepulchral voice. "Sir Walter Loveleigh once broke upon the devotions of an unoffending brother of St. Benedict! he desecrated the threshold of his dwelling with revilings and untimely jests; by his sacrilegious pastimes did he subject himself to the malediction of one whose curse, once pronounced, no soul can avert—no prayer retract—no penance annul! He dared to pollute our consecrated waters—to dally with virtues that do wash away the loathsome corruption of mortality; and from this hour a fearful retribution awaits him. Ye have drunk of the troubled waters of Hatfield Chase—the curse of William of Lindholme attend ye to your castle hall!"

Sir Walter, partly through rage, and partly through fear, started to his feet, and for the first time became conscious of the state of insensibility into which his young bride had been driven by the awful words and gestures of the priest. Turning from the latter, with eyes starting with passion, he raised the lady in his arms, and bore her through the rude doorway of the cell into the open air, where he loved her pale cheeks with the water flowing through the rock. As soon as animation was restored, Sir Walter lifted her into the saddle of his horse, and holding her before him, rode with haste home. The air and the ride seemed to have given reaction to her fainting system, and by the time they reached their destination, the fair Rosa declared herself well enough to join in the festivities of the day. The music began, and soon, in the gaiety of the

dance, the sinister words of the Hermit were forgotten.

The night was advanced—the tide of mirth bore the hours along—midnight was proclaimed from the turret walls. Hushed was the music and the laugh, the measured dance and the joyous song. Silence was in the hall, and soft feet moved round the couch of Rosa Loveleigh. A tremor was over her whole frame—her face was pale—her eyes were shut, or did but open at intervals, when a deathly languishment was in their expression. The frantic husband watched the intermitting breathings of his wife—he felt her tremors become more violent, until convulsions ensued—he saw her beautiful features writhing into most fearful contortions. The fever, the labored respiration, the death-pallor, the agony, struck terror into his soul; he uttered a wild exclamation, and fell senseless into the arms of his attendants. That night, bride and bridegroom lay side by side locked in the sleep of death!

Suspicious were busy in the minds of the bridal guests. No time was lost—they repaired to the Hermitage on the Chase. The door was fastened; and on admission being demanded, no reply was returned. The door was broken open. There lay the nefarious priest, in the last struggle between life and death. A drinking horn was by his side, toward which he pointed, and with his last breath he confessed having administered a poisonous drug to the bride and bridegroom, when they had visited him for the purpose of receiving his blessing; that afterward, by mistake, he had drunk of the fatal draught; and that the throes of death were already convulsing his system.

THE WHITE HOUSE UNDER THE ELMS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SUSY L—'S DIARY."

CHAPTER I.

You hear something on every hand of the white house under the elms, or of the owner of the house, Squire Hurlbut, or of the daughter of the house, Amy Hurlbut, if you come anywhere within three miles of Swamscott Plain. If you are at East Swamscott, and would fain be at Swamscott Bridge, by the shortest route; and if, to this end, you inquire about the way of any of the loungers at the hotel, the landlord, Jones, being there, he answers you. If he is not there, fat Squire Gilbert is, you may know; for he is always there. Half lying, half sitting, he is stretched upon a bench in the piazza; and without rising in the least from his elbow, without breaking off in the least the sluggish play with his tooth-pick, he says—"go down the hill you see there—it's steep, you see, but not long—and then turn to the right. You go on straight a while, over as pretty a road as ever you saw, sir, till you come to a large white house under the elms. You can hardly see the house for the elms. That's Squire Hurlbut's. There you've got to bear a little to the south; to the left, that is; for there are two roads, mind you, at the white house. Take the souther'most one, and it will lead you through the village called the Plain—close by the white house, almost—and to the Bridge, a mile and a half further on. You're a stranger in these parts, I see."

You bow your affirmative, thank him and go on.

You put up at the Coffee House at the bridge, for the sake of trouting in the brooks that go babbling everywhere, or of rest from your books, or your town life, in the magnificent walks that lie in all directions through the still old woods and along the brooks; in the berry hunts along the walls, or over the pastures. You stay for these; and that, when the walks are ended and the night comes on, you may sit in your arm-chair in the upper balcony, to look upon the mill-pond and dam where the branches of the great trees sweep so low, and the moon shines with a twinkling, silvery light.

The first hour that you spend there, and while you wait your dinner in sauntering back and forth in the lower balcony, the sheriff, Corning, throws his reins and springs to the ground, at

the same moment that his horse stops at the oft-frequented post; and he says to the landlord, "Peters, good morning. You! where can I get some good hay—clover?"

"Over to the white house under the elms, to Squire Hurlbut's, I guess. He's got a barn full of it; very best of hay. My horse has his living out of it, and he's as round as a pancake."

Smith, one of the village merchants, comes in with heavy steps and eyes. He seems to try to move briskly and to hold his head up firmly; but the briskness, the firmness all go the next moment after he has called them up; and it is because he has to borrow money somewhere that very day. He can put it off no longer.

He tucks Peters with his thumb, and takes him a little one side. He speaks low, but in a hissing, unpleasant sort of voice, that you hear distinctly every word; and you are reading the "Swamscott Herald," too. "Peters, the fact is—you see I'm obliged to go to Boston to-morrow to fill up." (Ah, but he isn't obliged to fill up. It isn't that he is thinking of, at all; but of satisfying his principal Boston creditor. Pity he couldn't say it honestly. 'Tis the falsehood in his soul, no doubt, that gives him the craven look. Pity that he didn't maintain an honest, uprightness, and let it speak in his face and with his tongue. This alone would recommend him to any man who is exactly fit to be in this world with money to lend to his straitened brothers.)

"And I've got to see to borrowing some money somewhere," Smith adds. "I wonder how it is with you——"

You see Peters turns a little and sets his back firmly against his money-drawer. "I tell you!" he says. "You'll get it at the white house—at Squire Hurlbut's. And I'll tell you how I know. Herrick told me to-day that he'd been up to pay him three hundred dollars that he borrowed of him last spring when he built his house, you know. You'd better try him, I guess. John! John!" to his boy, starting out of Mr. Smith's neighborhood—"call Watch out! Call him out! They're Squire Hurlbut's creatures; and his creatures are never in the road without some one near to take good care of them. They're driving them over to the other pasture, of course."

Poor Watch comes up to his master with

drooping ears and tail, as if suddenly his good opinion of himself were gone forever. Squire Hurlbut's creatures meanwhile go by, taking slow, measured steps, and always together with the look as if, of all the oxen and calves and sheep about, they are unquestionably the aristocracy, so to speak.

"There! there's a girl for you!" says Peters, starting, and laying one hand heavily on your shoulder, at the same time that he tosses the other a little toward the north. You look—indeed you had been looking some minutes already on a light buggy wagon, drawn by the sleekest of brown horses, and in which sits a stout gentleman of sixty, or thereabouts, with a fresh, good-natured face, and a little girl of sixteen perhaps, perhaps of eighteen, in a light gingham dress, and straw bonnet trimmed with blue ribands, within and without. She sits close by her father, you see; or, you are sure that he is her father, even before Peters adds—"the squire always wants her close to his elbow. The only girl they've ever had, you see; and she's made a real baby of at home—and everywhere else, for that matter. If you can get a peep at her eyes, any way, you'll see that they are bright ones; and——"

But you don't get a peep at her eyes; or, a second peep, that is. You have had one, and that is quite enough for you, perhaps. If it is not enough for you, it was enough for our hero, Ben Frank Hazeltine, who, once on a time—and it was four years ago this day; this sixth day of May—sat and sauntered by turns in the balcony of the Swamscott Coffee House, under precisely the romantic circumstances we have together imagined for you, dear bachelor friend. The mill-pond and the dam were there in plain sight; and the long, green, sweeping boughs of the old willow trees and the elms on the shore were dipping their tips in the cool waters and swinging above them, as if they were alive; as if they felt what graceful things they were doing, what a graceful life they were living there by the mill-pond and the rushing water-fall.

Amy Hurlbut was there beside her good-natured father, in the light buggy wagon. Besides bright eyes, she had a fair forehead, dimples in her cheeks and chin, and lips red as a cherry. She had a parasol too with a waving fringe; and, as she came along, she dropped it a little between herself and Ben Frank Hazeltine, as she would have done between herself and you, dear bachelor, if you had been there in Frank's place; certainly, if you are graceful and noble; if you have an air to distinguish you from all ordinary loungers in that balcony, as he had.

Moreover, the flavor of coffee and other excellent dishes was in the balcony, and John was in the door swinging the huge dinner-bell; so Frank took his eyes away from the light figure, the retreating carriage, and turned to his dinner, as you, dear sir, had better do—that is, if it is at all worth while, since you have no wife to pour your coffee, no little children to drop lumps of sugar in it, and to enliven the whole meal with its prattle.

CHAPTER II.

BEN FRANK HAZELTINE was an earnest, thoughtful man, who often chose rather the company of a few dear books, and of the trees and brooks, than of ordinary men and women; because in men and women he saw many affections, many insincerities, many offences of various other kinds; and in the brooks and trees he saw none. If the brooks were muddied by the storms, it was the storm's fault, not the brooks. This the brooks seemed to feel; for they went tinkling on just the same, biding their time until clearness should come again. If the trees were gnarled and twisted standing there in the midst of the erect, the perfectly regular and beautiful trees, they still, in their quiet way, did their very best; still offered the cooling shade, the musical flutter of many leaves; they nestled the singing birds close; and, whatever they did, doing it without ostentation. If they were gnarled and twisted, it was the fault of the seed from which they sprang, or of obstructions in the way of a perfect growth; like the brooks, therefore, they bothered you and spoilt themselves by no awkward apologies and self-justifications. So that, as you looked on them more and more, you loved them more and more, until it was made clear to you that the sublimest features of that forest landscape, were, after all, the gnarled, the twisted, the uncomplaining old trees.

Frank Hazeltine had been only three days at the Bridge, when our story opens; but he had explored every hill and dingle within two miles. He knew all the prettiest homes of the arbutus, all the windings and little cascades in all the brooks about, and all the darkly-shaded places, where the mossy lounges were, over which the little shy, plaintive-toned birds sang in the branches. He had passed the white house under the elms in one of these walks. It was just at night; and he went by slowly, that he might see well what a picture of thrift and comfort the whole place was. He saw nothing of the daughter of the house, Miss Amy. He heard her though, laughing, and the next moment singing,

as if she were a mocking bird. For the rest, he saw a very large white house with green blinds, spacious yard and garden, where were many trees, many shrubs, and clustering vines, and many trellises of many fashions. A boy of twelve drew water at a well in the orchard close to the back door; seemed intent on what he was doing; and whistled "Bright Aleanata" in a musical way, as if he had a great deal of pleasure in it. Two other manly little fellows played on the carriage-sweep between the yard and the road. One ran with a stick, to which the dog, Hesnut, clung; the other sat quietly on the turf repairing his kite strings. His name was Washington, Hazeltine knew, because he heard the other little fellow say to him—"Wash! shouldn't you be glad if Hesnut was as big as an elephant? bigger than an elephant? I should."

"Poh!" said Wash, half lifting his eyes a moment from his work. "If he was, he could take you on his trunk and set you up on the top of that mountain, away over there; and would, as likely as not. And then you wouldn't see father nor mother, nor Amy any more. What do you think of that, Mister Fred?"

Freddy at first seemed to think it rather a grave affair. But, in a moment, it was forgotten, and he was again springing over the turf with Hesnut.

Hazeltine sighed a little for the buoyancy of heart and limb; wondered what might be the look of the owner of the voice he had heard; wondered if troubles, great or small, came often to that house, as they are accustomed to come to other houses; wondered if the mistress of the house were a motherly sort of woman, who smiled kindly on all who came, and gave them warm, corn-meal bread and rich milk and berries; wondered—wondered, at last, if he were not almost back to his hotel; for he was hungry! he was tired! he believed he was a little impatient and cross. But good! it would be over again. He would eat his good supper. He would then sit and watch the moonlight on the trees and water, and nurse his content.

He did; but he dreamed a little of the bird-like voice, now and then; and afterward whistled a little and called it all folly.

CHAPTER III.

The next day Amy passed by, as has already been related. The next, he was sitting on a turf-cushioned rock on the road-side, close to the grey wall, close to a clump of lively, whispering birches, and seeing to some matter that made his fishing-tackle difficult to carry, at the same time

that he was carrying an open book and reading, when he heard the steps of a horse, lightly cantering. It was Amy, as the reader knows, beforehand. The reader knows, beforehand, how, after that, he some way had glimpses of her everywhere that he went; and some way had glimpses of nobody else; how he saw a fitting figure through an open window or door, whenever he passed the white house under the elms, (as, truth to speak, he often did, on his way to East Swamscott, where an old friend was settled in trade; or in search of a trout neighborhood; and just think of it, reader mine! think of his going, every now and then a morning, up over that far-sweeping hill searching for trout!—or to ride his host's plump horse, Pancake, as Hazeltine called him, and as we, therefore, shall call him, in want of another name.) The time had come when she must be often in the yard and garden, remodelling the beds, clearing the dead leaves out of the borders, sowing seeds and digging with her little hoe among the perennial plants and shrubs. She was often there in the early morning; oftener, still, and for a longer time in the early evening. And then the boys and Hesnut were always with her. Her mother was sometimes with her, helping her; and her father; helping her a little, but hindering her more, partly because he did not exactly understand "Amy's flagree work," as he called it, and partly for the sake of the jokes and laughter they all loved so well.

"Father don't behave so well as we do, does he, mother? does he, Amy?" Hazeltine heard the good-voiced Johnny saying one evening, in the midst of a great deal of laughter. "He steps on one bed, and then, when you tell him of it, he goes scampering right over on to another, as if he didn't know it; but I know he does, don't you? Don't you know he does it a purpose to be puny, Amy?"

"I think he does, Johnny," Amy replied in a hearty voice. "Oh, but then, how warm it is; I shant wear my bonnet!" she added, dropping her hoe to untie her bonnet. "I shall throw it into the palm tree thus! I shall put my hair back thus!"—with both hands putting her hair away from her face and ears. "I shall——"

But she did not draw off her polka, as from her action it was clear that she meant to do—if her eyes had not that moment fallen on our hero. He was passing the gate. He, in truth, did little in those days but saunter, or rock, and think about the people there at the white house; but he still carried gun and fishing-tackle with him; and his book, his Howadji's "Syria;" and always had Watch with him. He had them all with him

now, as if his life were intent on, at least, forty purposes. He was going straight forward to take the road that led to Swamscott Bridge; but his head was half turned; his eyes were wholly turned and fixed on Amy, as she saw in the quick glimpse she had of him.

"Oh, dear!" said she; in very low tones, but he heard them. He saw too the impatient action that accompanied them; saw her turn hastily away, catch up her hoe; and, with her head bent, go on with her work again.

No one else saw him, it appeared; for the jests and the laughter went on; but he heard no more of Amy's voice.

At church, on the Sabbath, Peters introduced him to Judge Humphreys; and upon a hint from Peters that his pew—the judge's pew, that is—was very soft and elegant, while his own was hard and plain, and not in altogether the "genteel quarter" of the house, the judge invited Hazeltine to take a seat with him; when services were over invited him, with many gracious inclinations, to take a seat there any Sabbath, *every* Sabbath, if he pleased, while he remained among them. Hazeltine gave many thanks; but he sighed somewhere in the midst of them; for you see Judge Humphreys' pew and Esquire Hurlbut's were side by side, with not even an aisle between them. It was something to sit there so near Amy, to see how perfectly beautiful she was, and what demure little ways she had of leaning her head on her hand, and looking on the white-haired preacher all the while. This too was something; and with this the sigh had something to do, that she had not once looked at him through the services; not once seen that he was in the house, as he believed, or taken a thought that there was such a person as himself in the world, and his heart ready to thump people over on its way to her feet, too! She had a grave air, as if her thoughts were fixed upon something holy and pure, when she came in, when she went out, and when she was in the crowd at the door, waiting for their carriage to come up. The look was a reproach to Hazeltine, who stood near her, doing his best to know what Judge Humphreys was saying to him, and what Mrs. Humphreys and Miss Humphreys, to whom the judge had introduced him; but utterly unable to know any thing beyond this, that Amy Hurlbut was an angel, with a voice and a bearing to put sin and suffering out of every one that could be near her, that could see her smile, and hear her speak, as she was speaking then to one and another who came along. They came with hands seeking her's, and with an expression upon their faces and their movements which said plainly—"I wanted

to come near you and touch your hand. You see I have trouble, in one way or another often; and am often weary with this 'march of life;' and some way it does me good to look into your eyes that are so quiet and friendly, and to hear the cheerful words, that are always the very words I need to hear. I am sure I hope somebody will bless you for the blessing you are to us all, by your good-natured and kind ways." Hazeltine understood it all, and even had tears in his eyes. He watched closer and closer for one look—just that she might know that there *was* a Ben Frank Hazeltine, and that he had been there in the same house with her, listening to the same simple words of truth, the same unpretending, but heart-touching music; and that he had stood there so near her that he could hear the softest words she spoke. But it was of no use; for now that the crowd was thinned so that no one came to speak to her, she talked with her mother, smiled on the little brothers, and watched the approaching carriage.

Esquire Hurlbut, when he came up, gave him a bow that was worth having; for it said—"I rather respect you, sir stranger, and like the looks of you. If you want any of my trout, catch 'em; or of my birds, shoot 'em. If you want anything, any time, come to me as if I were no stranger at all; as if I were your old friend; for we are here in the same world together; and you're my brother, any way!"

Mrs. Hurlbut's eye rested on him a little on her way into the carriage. It said to him—or, he believed it did; and no doubt he was right—"you are a stranger, sir, I see. But you have a mother somewhere, who loves you. Or you had one once who loved you and gave up her rest for you. I could easily love you for her sake."

The twelve years old Webster was quite too bashful and too proud to look him fairly in the face at all. But he watched him with sidelong glances both in the church and at the door; and hoped that when he came to be a man, he would be like that man; that his hair would be as black and thick and wavy, and that it would lie about his forehead and neck in the same fine way; that his cloth would be as black and fine, his collar and cravat and waistcoat as unquestionable. He hoped that so genteel a man would just see him, and see if he did not look a little better than any of the rest of the boys. And if he would just notice their carryall and their horses, and see how they were the most stylish-looking there, that would be capital! And if he would see how pretty his sister Amy was, and what pretty ways she had about her, wouldn't that too be capital!

Washington and Johnny had their heads close together over the affair. They felt as though they knew him and liked him, they said to each other, they had seen him pass their place so many times; and had seen him stop a little and look at their play, as if he were thinking of speaking to them. They were glad that he remembered them at church; and they knew he did remember them, because he smiled in a real good way when he saw them looking at him out by the door.

Yes; all but Amy. All the rest saw him; and in one way or another felt interest in him. She had not a word to speak. She only looked away over the hills, when she heard the rest talking about him and praising him. When good-voiced Johnny said, appealing to her—"I don't care if he does shoot some of our birds, do you, Amy?—if he don't kill any of the robins, and sparrows, and wrens, and blue-birds, that have been gone all winter and just got back. Do you, Amy? Say, Amy! do you?" tugging at her hand to bring her face round.

"Yes, I do, Johnny. I shan't like him if he kills one of our birds."

"Then you don't like him now!" eagerly interposed Wash.

"No!" said good-voiced Johnny; "for I heard his gun go bang! up in our woods the other day; and, in a little while, it went bang! again; and then (don't you know, Wash?) pretty soon he went down by with a partridge and a grey squirrel in his hand. Didn't he, Wash?"

"Yes. Do you like him now, Amy?"

"I don't like to have him killing the birds and squirrels."

"But you like him, don't you? I do. Don't you, Amy?"

"Not very well. See, Wash! see, Johnny! there is a dear wood colored bird up on the tip-top of that little limb, singing. Hear him; see how he tips back his head, open his throat and pours out the beautiful sounds. What would you say if your new friend were here to raise his gun and shoot him while he sings?"

"I should be madder than any fire!" said Johnny. And even Johnny had flashing eyes.

"You needn't be mad, Johnny," said Wash, who, impetuous as a whirlwind himself, had seldom reason to lecture the placid tempered little Johnny. "He wouldn't do it. He just kills the birds that are good to eat and that don't sing anything worth hearing. And father says it's right to shoot them? Didn't you say so, father?"

"Yes, my son," watching with Amy and Johnny to see how the little brown bird went

careering hither and thither on his light wings, keeping along with their carriage.

"There!" persisted Wash. "Now don't you like him, Amy?—that man that you call our new friend, I mean?"

"Not very well."

Wash was gravely disappointed and at a loss. Besides being impetuous, or better, along with being impetuous his heart was always running over with generosity and affectionate zeal toward those who liked him, and smiled when he came along, and treated him in a delicate way, as if he were a man. His quick instincts helped him to tell that his "new friend"—as he loved to keep calling him in his thoughts—was one of these; and he would hardly have cared for taking a little piece out of his cheek, if it could have made the Amy he loved so well say that she too liked him, and was willing that he should kill all the birds, if that was what he wanted to do.

He did not speak again on the way home. But he kept his large, fine eyes going here and there amongst the birds. The next day, even while he ate his meals, he watched hoping to see his new friend come up the road. And, by-the-bye, he had all his pockets stuffed out with the last year russets, with which he meant to make his acquaintance when once he did come.

CHAPTER IV.

BUT Hazeltine sat almost all day in his arm-chair in the upper balcony, snapping his knife-blade and wondering whether the jovial young Hurlbut he remembered seeing at the last year's commencement at Dartmouth, belonged in the white house under the elms; wondering whether Amy Hurlbut was a prude or a coquette; whether he would ever, under any circumstances, see the inside of the white house, see Amy in the midst of her family; and, if he would, whether the circumstances would be so and thus, or thus and so; wondering if any of those books that he had strewn about him, or morning papers, would ever again be worth anything to him. Poh! what indeed could Whittier, or Klopstock, or Lamb, or Goethe, or even the blessed, child-like-minded Howadji say in any of those books, or papers, that he did not already know? that he could not say as well, or, at any rate, well enough, if he would take the pains? Poh! He was sure he wondered how he ever had patience to spend his days and nights with them as he had done; as he did when he first came to Swamscott. As for the rambles by the brooks and through the woods, what dull old paths! let the sheep walk in them. And what were trout good for? Could

anybody tell him what they were good for, or what it was worth to catch them? Poh, indeed! Amy Hurlbut—why, let Amy Hurlbut go! Was there nobody else in the whole world for one to be thinking about but Amy Hurlbut, pray? He rather thought he would demonstrate shortly that there was. There was Miss Humphreys, for instance; not so much like a dove or a lamb, was she; as Amy Hurlbut was; (or *seemed*; perhaps only seemed; *probably* only seemed.) But she was magnificent. Her papa was magnificent. All the Humphreys were magnificent, for that matter; and he would go that afternoon, as he had been invited by each one of them, and be with the sewing circle at their house, and take tea with them. The preceptor of the Swamscott Academy, whose name was Edward Singleton, and who boarded with him there at the Swamscott Coffee House, had, in the morning, and again at noon, offered to accompany him; had assured and reassured him that all the Humphreys particularly desired his company, since the judge had some how learned that he was the nephew and *protegee* of the rich manufacturer, Hazeltine, of Boston. Yes! so Hazeltine promised to go. And so, at three o'clock, he came to his feet; *precisely* at three o'clock; for he looked at his watch every five minutes during the last half hour before the time; since he had determined that, at three o'clock he would put his knife in his pocket, be done with Amy Hurlbut and all the Hurlbuts, and turn himself over, bodily and psychologically to Edward Singleton and the Humphreys; especially to the Humphreys; especially to Miss Humphreys, who, as he had seen, was gracefully near-sighted; who wore satin dresses and embroidery, and had numberless articles of gold and precious stones about her.

Miss Humphreys and her very dear friend, Augusta Morse, assistant principal of Swamscott Academy, had their heads close together over their crochet work, when he came. Miss Humphreys had just been saying to Miss Morse—"oh, yes, indeed! the Hazeltines are *all* so rich, you know! *Everybody* knows how rich the Hazeltines of Boston are. Why, this uncle of his—and he has no children, you know," lifting her eyes in a peculiar way she had, half-ascREW, half-asquint, "he owns the mills, and almost the whole village at Tuberville; and has besides property at Springfield and Andover. Oh, he's immensely rich!"

"Is!"—evidently with far less self-gratulation, far less gratulation of any sort, in the matter than her friend had.

"Yes, indeed! and this Hazeltine that is here, you know, is his principal director; that is, he

just sees to his uncle's business everywhere, as the uncle himself does; or, in pretty much the same way. And has his *home* at his uncle's as if he was *really* his son, you know."

"Yes;" lifting her eyes a little from her work and bowing a little.

"Yes! and so he can go travelling off to the mountains, or the springs, or to any of the watering-places, or to a country place like this, or any where, whenever he wants to, and keep things along at the works, by just writing every day or so to the under agents and so on. And—*see* those girls! I wonder what they are looking at. It's time for *him* to be here, and the preceptor, I should think," dragging out her watch. "So he writes the greatest number of letters. And"—putting her head closer to Miss Morse's, and speaking very low—"and Hetty Crane says he never sends one to any lady, except occasionally one to Mrs. George W. Hazeltine; his *aunt*, you know." She looked up as if she expected to be congratulated upon this circumstance; especially upon *this*.

"Ah!" said Miss Morse, who, truth to say, by the way, was a noble, fine-looking woman, and Miss Humphreys' senior by several years.

"Yes. I was in there the other day—in at the post-office, I mean—(I guess he's coming now by the way those girls *act*.) I was in there," speaking hurriedly, and adjusting her undersleeves, handkerchief, work, and the folds of her dress at the same time, "and he brought in a *whole bundle* of letters he had been writing; a *whole bundle* of them. And I *never* saw, *any where*, such beautiful, such perfectly beautiful writing."

In passing, Miss Humphreys had a certain emphatic way of speaking, of which our readers will have difficulty in getting a conception, so that we must even go under-scoring all of the way, if we would represent her adequately.

Mrs. Humphreys stood in the parlor door to receive our gentlemen. She filled the door with her, by no means tall, but wide self, with her ample folds of lustrous silk. She put on airs of overteeming delight and obsequiousness, as if Frank were a king, and Singleton his prime minister, or Lord Chamberlain. She almost overthrew knots of young girls on her way with the gentlemen across the parlor to a pleasant corner, where the Misses Humphreys and Morse sat on a new *tete-a-tete*. The *tete-a-tete* was from a Boston warehouse the day before; and so was the great soft arm-chair with the rockers, in which Frank was to seat himself close by the *tete-a-tete*, according to Mrs. Humphreys' intimation; and the soft arm-chair without rockers, where Singleton was

to sit. He was to sit there, Miss Humphreys said, with one hand on the back of the chair, and another pointing to the seat; for Edward Singleton out of a genial heart, and without making the least noise about it, was a punctilious man, who taught his pupils expressly to give the best seats to their betters. And elderly ladies were there, his best friends, some of them, and the mothers of some of his best pupils, sitting close by in the chairs without arms, without cushions, without rockers, the kind of chairs that are always expected to keep their places stiffly by the walls. Would not they—would not Mrs. Crane, for instance, have that chair, Singleton asked. But Mrs. Humphreys interposed. She herself had asked her that question when she came, Mrs. Humphreys said; but she declined. Would Mr. Singleton take the chair now, like a good boy, and then his friend, Mr. Hazeltine would be seated quite at his ease, instead of standing, as it mortified her to see him doing in her house.

"Yes, yes, sit down, Ned!" said Mrs. Crane, who was Singleton's relative. She was a fat, laughing little woman, who never had a spark of malice, or any sort of ill-nature in her soul; and who, therefore, spoke always with a leaping, unbridled, albeit harmless tongue.

"Sit down," she added, with her round hand on the cushion. "Sit down, Mr. Hazeltine. I have no doubt the chairs took the cars and came up here, knowing all the way that they were for you two. And this *teety-a-teety*—as I used to call it when I was a young girl and read novels—came up to accommodate Judith and Miss Morse. Didn't they, Mrs. Humphreys? I will leave it to you. Didn't they hold themselves back when you offered them to us? I thought they did at the time."

Mrs. Humphreys laughed. In a hollow way, though. She always laughed with a hollow sound, and with a hollow expression on her features. She called Mrs. Crane "a lively creature," made remarks to Frank and Singleton—stereotyped remarks they were; she presented them to all who came—upon the weather, upon the forwardness of the spring. And were they not both fond of spring? Did they not think that it was the season of hope; and that autumn, on the contrary, was the season of melancholy? She had a friend once, a most intimate friend, who always connected the seasons with the mind, in that way. Her friend's name was Hazeltine; she was the daughter of a clergyman of that name, of Acton. Did Mr. Hazeltine know, was she his relative? Mrs. Humphreys bowed very low and very stiffly when she propounded the question.

No; she was not Frank's relative. Or, so he believed. Ah? she was rather sorry. She had, in a way, made up her mind that they were related. Had he never heard of her father? *Luther Hazeltine*, she believed his name was. She was not certain. She believed that that was the way her friend used to superscribe her letters. Perhaps he had heard of them?

No. Frank regretted that he could not give her another answer; but he had really never heard of the Hazeltines of Acton. Again Mrs. Humphreys was sorry. Getting over it a little, she "must ask how he liked their village;" and whether he didn't find it dull?

"Not dull in the least; far from it."

Mrs. Humphreys was glad to hear that. She had thought about it a great many times, she and her daughter had spoken of it often; they spoke of it that very morning, while they were at breakfast; they were afraid he would find it dull, where people were all so busy, such workers, that they had no time to attend to strangers.

"Or we here are lazy enough," she added, looking in her daughter's face, as indeed she did somewhere in each of her remarks. "My daughter and I don't know hardly what to do with ourselves, half of the time, for want of seeing more company than we can see here." She smiled; she smiled in fact, all the way along, smiled in her manner, that is. She said something to Frank and Singleton about leaving them in the care of the girls—meaning her daughter and Miss Morse, and then went jostling people on her way to the back parlor.

CHAPTER V.

LET me recollect what was the first thing said by Miss Humphreys after her mother left the room. She made great stir and ado about it, I knew, not as if she were just a little lady sitting in a corner of the *tele-a-tele*, who had some good things in her soul worth finding, worth speaking in a quiet way, but actually as if she were a smart revenue cutter, with whose rigging and outfit masterly pains had been taken, so that she might be fit for that moment, when the frigate should move off and leave the whole coast to her. So she laid her head back on her shoulders, screwed her eyes, crossed her hands in a new way, cleared her throat, and said—"what ma said of spring, Mr. Hazeltine, makes me think of Mrs. Hemans' 'Voice of the Spring.' You have read that poem, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am."

"Yes; I read it all the time lately, don't I, Miss Morse? I have a real passion for it!—a real passion! Haven't I, Miss Morse?"

"So you say," with a quiet smile.

"Yes, and I have. Which do you like best, Mr. Hazeltine, (I know which Mr. Singleton likes best; for I have asked him and he told me;) and now which do you like best, Mrs. Hemans or Elizabeth Barrett?"

"Elizabeth Barrett."

"Do?" jostled a little, one saw, in her well-drilled curvetings. "I don't know but I do. But Mrs. Hemans writes beautifully, don't she?"

"Certainly."

"Yes; I admire her."

And more she said, a great deal more, of this same character, so that Frank was ready to tear his hair.

Hu! could one stand that, two mortal hours—for two hours he calculated it would be to Mrs. Humphreys' tea-time. The room made so close by the summer heat and the large company, forty ears beside Miss Humphreys' listening for every word he would speak, forty eyes, again beside Miss Humphreys', watching to see his manner of saying it—hu! he would be stone dead there in his chair in less than two hours, if that went on. Could not Singleton talk, pray? Was he suddenly stricken dumb? He would try him. He would say something revivifying to him; something that had pepper and spice in it.

Ah, but he didn't; he couldn't. He could no more do it, than if he were a man made of lead, with leaden veins, leaden arteries and leaden nerves. Hu!

And what would Miss Humphreys say now? She was again setting her head back, again laying her hands on her soft embroidery.

"Have you seen any of Clarina Adalembert's writings?—she writes for Peterson's National."

"Clarina Adalembert's?"

"Yes. This isn't her real name. Her real name—I will tell him, Miss Morse!—her real name is Miss Morse, Augusta Morse. And here she is!"

Miss Morse laughed and blushed in rather a sensible way, as if she were too sensible to take

so foolish a name upon herself, and said—"that is nothing, Miss Humphreys."

"Oh, but you say"—laughing immoderately, as if she were about to pen Miss Morse in a corner—"you say my poor lines are something; and if mine are something, I am sure your's are a great deal!"

This was all Hazeltine heard; for, just then, somehow a cool, moist breeze seemed to go over him. He felt it as if it were a baptism, even before he caught a sound of Amy Hurlbut's voice, or a glimpse of her light figure tripping along the hall. At least, so he verily believed; and, if half the psychologists say is true, it may be that he did.

"Amy—Amy"—and "Amy has come!" Frank heard from a dozen voices. Old voices, middle-aged voices and young voices chimed in the girl's welcome, with the same glad cadence. They claimed her in both parlors. Some young girls, who would not, any way, bear the crowded back parlor to which Mrs. Humphreys took them when they came, (and, by-the-bye, it so happened that she put all the young ladies, save her daughter and Miss Morse, into that room, together with a few advanced ladies who wore uninteresting gowns and caps) had brought their work out and taken their seats on the wide stairs. There it was pleasant; and there Amy must come as soon as she got her work. They had been keeping a place for her all the afternoon. And what made her so late? what made her so late? She was too bad, wasn't she, Cad? wasn't she, Hetty? wasn't she, Lou and May and Clarissa? For she knew they always wanted her in the first of it.

Hazeltine heard that; heard Amy's cheery replies, her soft laughter; saw the affectionate interlacing of white fingers, of white arms, the quick meeting of rosy lips; and drew himself up giving thanks that there was vivacity and feeling and natural, spontaneous expression somewhere in that great company of God-made beings, if Miss Humphreys and her mother had none of them.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MISS PENDYKE'S POODLE.

BY J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

ONE fine spring morning, Mrs. Wickley looked through the jessamine screens that shaded the windows of her village and saw Mr. Solomon Hatch, of wheel-barrow renown, laboring toward the garden gate, with a load of band-boxes, carpet-bags and trunks.

Mr. Hatch was followed by a very large lady, and a very small dog. Suddenly the proprietor of the public wheel-barrow stopped, looking around, as if he had been spoken to. Thereupon the large lady took hold of the small dog, and lifted him carefully to the summit of the load of baggage. Having patted his neck to make him lie there, she waved her hand to Sol, who proceeded on his way.

Mrs. Wickley was as enviable, quiet, and good-natured as any pretty little wife of twenty-five you ever saw; yet she laughed behind the jessamine, till tears ran down her cheeks, at the ludicrousness of the scene I have described.

"What an odd woman that must be!" she said to herself; for the large lady was queenly dressed, and had a majestic gait, which, considered in connection with the pile of baggage, and the little dog, would have excited a smile from the village minister himself. "It is lucky for Sol's shoulders that she did not mount his vehicle, and ride, instead of the poodle. She is going to see some of my neighbors, I suppose. Dear me! how terrific! to see such a large woman coming to make a visit, with so much baggage! I am thankful she is not coming to see us—mercy?"

The laughter died on Lizzie's lips. The mirth faded from her countenance. She seemed horror-struck.

The truth is, Mr. Solomon Hatch, with his wheel-barrow, baggage, little dog and big lady, had stopped at Mrs. Wickley's gate!

Lizzie sank upon a chair in the greatest consternation, and called Polly to bring her smelling bottle and a fan.

"Polly!" she said, inhaling the restorative essence.

"What, mum?"

"Do look out of the window, and see who that is Sol Hatch has brought here from the railroad!"

Polly thrust her red arm through the jessa-

mines, brought her vision to bear upon the stranger, and declared that she blessed her soul she didn't know!

"But I guess," said she.

"What do you guess?"

"I guess she's some of Mr. Wickley's relations!"

Dismayed by the mere supposition, Lizzie sent the domestic to admit the visitor.

While Sol Hatch, having carefully lifted the little dog into the large lady's arms, proceeded deliberately to unload his wheel-barrow, she walked majestically up the garden path, and knocked at the door. The next moment she loomed up before Mrs. Wickley, a mountain of flesh worthy of such a mountain of baggage.

"And this is my niece!" she exclaimed, smiling benevolently and kissing Lizzie over the poodle.

"Then you are—are Mr. Wickley's aunt?" faltered Lizzie, trembling.

"Aunt Lucina, my dear! You have heard him talk about his Aunt Lucina, I know! Then you are his sweet little wife. Hie! Princie—don't bark, Princie! This is Cousin Wickley."

"Gr—r—r—r!" said Princie, in the old lady's arms.

"Poor Princie! was he frightened?" said Aunt Lucina, smoothing his shaggy neck. "That's a naughty Princie! Come, Princie! kiss his cousin."

Lizzie, horrified at being denominated the poodle's near relation, put out her hand instinctively, as the old lady approximated his hairy face to her's; but Aunt Lucina, having set her heart upon seeing a cousinly kiss, followed up the undertaking until Princie was pacified, and Lizzie reconciled to her fate. After the affectionate poodle had licked her nose tenderly, he was caressed by his mistress, and placed carefully upon the floor; whereupon he ran savagely at Polly, who sprang backward with a scream, and fell into the pantry.

"Take him away!" she shrieked. "He'll eat me up!"

At this Lizzie could not help laughing heartily; and her good humor being perfectly restored, she was prepared to treat her husband's relative kindly. Accordingly, as soon as Aunt Lucina

had made an end of praising Prince for his valor, and gently reproving him for his lack of gallantry in attacking a helpless female, she was conducted by Lizzie herself to an apartment, whither Sol Hatch conveyed as much of her baggage as she desired.

Greatly relieved at seeing the dangerous poodle shut up with his mistress, the timid Polly was herself again, and went to Mr. Wickley's store to announce the important arrival, calmly as if her life had never been in danger.

Mr. Wickley proceeded at once to congratulate his wife on his aunt's condescension.

"It's a great event!" said he, in a whisper. "Only think of it! she's worth her thousands! We must treat her like a queen!"

"And her poodle like a king, I suppose!" laughed Lizzie.

"And I hate dogs, though!" suddenly muttered Alonzo, thoughtfully—"poodle dogs above all! But we'll have to endure it only a few days. We can love her and love her dog for any reasonable length of time."

"I thought more of your principles than this!" murmured Lizzie.

"My principles? eh?"

"Yes, Alonzo. I never supposed you would play the hypocrite for anybody's favor——"

"Dear Lizzie!" exclaimed Mr. Wickley, coloring, "you don't understand me. Isn't she my aunt?"

"And shouldn't any respectable aunt be treated with respect?"

"To be sure. But Prince is not my cousin," said Lizzie, laughing, "and I don't know as I owe him either respect or love. Seriously, however, Alonzo—I know we shan't like your Aunt Lucina, and although I think we ought to treat her kindly while she stays with us, I don't think we ought to profess a great deal more affection than we feel."

"No, certainly—but then—bless you, Lizzie! you are too scrupulous! Think of our children, for whom a few thousand dollars would come so beautifully in play, some of these days! No, we must not be hypocrites—but it won't do to neglect the interest of our children, you know!"

The allusion to her children, whom she dearly loved, blinded Lizzie to the lameness of his arguments, and she began to think a little hypocrisy would not be very wrong, nor very difficult of accomplishment, after all.

Shortly after, Aunt Lucina came out of her apartment and embraced her nephew, who kissed her tenderly, (much against his taste) and suffered Prince to lick his nose.

Now although Lizzie had succeeded in quieting

her conscience in respect to the use of a reasonable degree of hypocrisy, she could not help feeling shocked at her husband's extravagant expressions of joy on meeting his aunt. Had he confined himself to mere kindness toward the old lady, it would have been otherwise; but when, in his great gladness of heart, he went so far as to caress and fondle the poodle, his wife lost all patience, and hastily escaped to the kitchen, where she labored to convince the timid Polly that there was no danger of Prince's eating her, and that brave as he was, a bold front would cool his thirst for blood.

At this juncture, the children—three in number, viz: Alonzo, aged two; Lizzie, aged six; and Lucina, in her fourth year—came home from school. One after the other, they endured the disagreeable old lady's caresses, looking very silly, and not knowing what to say. The youngest girl, less obedient to her father's wishes, however, struggled in the old lady's arms, and shook her bright curls all over her face, so that there appeared small chance for kissing.

"Hold up your head like a little lady!" said Mr. Wickley. "We named her after you, aunt: she is very timid."

Miss Pendyke—for that was the old maid's name—seemed highly pleased at this indication of tender respect, on the part of her nephew; while the latter silently congratulated himself on the circumstance, that, having disputed with Lizzie about a name for their third child, they had compromised the matter by calling her Lucina.

The old lady's name-sake would not be kissed, however; and soon after she further manifested her dislike to the new comers, by chastising Prince with a broomstick, to the terror of her father, and the horror of Miss Pendyke.

As soon as peace and good feeling were restored, and the other children had done penance for Lucina, by kissing the poodle, Polly announced dinner, and there was a funeral movement toward the table. Lizzie led little Lucina, who was sobbing because the broomstick had been taken away from her; Alonzo conducted his aunt, who—*horresco referens*!—carried the poodle!

Mrs. Wickley exchanged glances with Mr. Wickley. Mr. Wickley glanced wickedly at Prince, who glanced wickedly at him and said,

"Gr—r—r—r—r!"

Thereupon Mr. Wickley bit his lips; afterward smiled; made a polite flourish to his aunt, and inquired in a half jesting tone if she would have the arm-chair brought for her lap dog.

"You are very kind!" replied Miss Pendyke.

"I sometimes hold him in my lap, but as I am tired, I think he will have to content himself in the chair."

Mrs. Wickley was shocked. Mr. Wickley was well nigh thrown off his guard. But he summoned all his patience for the trial, and turned away his face—ostensibly to speak to Polly; in reality to hide his blushes, and said,

"Bring the big chair!"

Miss Pendyke sat down with Princie in her arms, and held him tenderly until the chair was rolled to her elbow, when he was placed comfortably upon the cushion.

It is needless to relate, minutely, the history of Miss Pendyke, and Princie, her poodle, at Mr. Wickley's house. Lizzie became daily more and more weary of the part she had attempted to play, and of that assumed by her husband. For only one thing did she have cause to feel thankful. Alonzo, who, after the first few months of their married life, had shown himself a somewhat fretful mortal, proved to be the most patient of men. Miss Pendyke and her poodle could do whatever they pleased in his house, and he showed no irritability in view of the liberties they took. He endured Princie in the parlor, at the table, in his lap, with Christian humility. When he bit Lucina, and actually brought little stars of blood, with his sharp teeth, on her fair arm, he was coaxed, and told in tones of mild reproach, that he was very naughty. When he tore little Lizzie's new bonnet to pieces, the crime was winked at; and Mr. Wickley purchased a new bonnet more cheerfully than he was wont to open his purse for his family.

On the other hand, Miss Pendyke was flattered, caressed, and instituted mistress of the house, as Princie was the master; and the two lived sumptuously to the great deprivation of Mrs. Wickley and the children.

Days—weeks—months rolled by, and Miss Pendyke gave no intimation of bringing her visit to a close. Every night Lizzie cried with vexation, and remonstrated with her husband, for giving up everything to his aunt and her dog.

"But she *can't* continue her visit much longer!" he would reply—"and when she is gone we shall not be sorry for having done all in our power to please her."

And at length—it was in the month of September—Miss Pendyke declared her intention to depart. Alonzo ventured timidly to urge her to spend the autumn with them, but all she could do was to promise him the pleasure of another visit the following summer.

As yet Aunt Lucina had made no presents to the family, except some trifling gifts to the children; and Mr. Wickley expected "something handsome" on the day of her departure. He had neglected his business for her; he had deprived his children to gratify her dog; he had made himself and Lizzie miserable to render her happy; and he felt that the least the rich old lady could do, would be to volunteer the expense of young Alonzo's future education.

On the morning of her departure, Mr. Wickley appeared much affected. He made all his children kiss her; and compelled Lizzie to assume an appearance of affliction. He then accompanied his aunt to the railway station, carrying the poodle in his arms, to show his love. Still not a word of any gift; no promise of property to his children. Alonzo was beginning to despair; but, on taking final leave of her, the cars, his hopes suddenly brightened.

"For all this kindness," she said, "I have been thinking what return I can make. After mature reflection," she continued, with emotion, patting Princie's neck, "I have resolved to make the greatest sacrifice in my power, to show my gratitude."

"Oh, I assure you, aunt——"

"Yes, I will make it. You have deserved it. You have been kind to me, and you have *loved* Princie! Here! he is yours! and may heaven bless you!"

What happened, until Mr. Wickley found himself standing on the platform of the station, with the dog in his arms, and the cars in the distance—he never knew; but having recovered from his stupor, he regarded Princie for a moment with a melancholy expression, then carried him tenderly home, chopped off his head, buried the dead, and related the story to Lizzie—with a dismal laugh and an earnest affirmation, that if he was ever caught playing the hypocrite again, she might name their next child, if she pleased, after Miss Pendyke's poodle.

"NEVER CONTENTED LONG."

BY ELLEN ASHTON.

"I wish we had a new carpet," said Mrs. Arnold, somewhat petulantly, to her husband.

Mr. Arnold looked up from his newspaper, glanced at the carpet, and said, "if you really think we want one, my dear, you may go and buy it to-morrow; but this seems to me quite decent yet."

"Yes! decent, I grant," said his wife, with emphasis. "But I am not contented with being decent merely. If I can't be more than decent, nice in fact, I don't want to live at all."

"Well, well, my love," replied the husband, "suit yourself." For Mr. Arnold was doing a good business, and knew he could afford a little extravagance, now and then.

The carpet was accordingly purchased, and, for a while, Mrs. Arnold was contented, or appeared to be so. As long as the novelty continued, she really was satisfied. But when she had grown tired of admiring it, and when the neighbors, having all seen it, ceased to expatiate on its beauties, she began to be dissatisfied again. It was not the carpet of course which now made her unhappy; it was the parlor chairs.

"I do think we have the shabbiest chairs," she said, one evening, "of anybody I know. I declare I'm ashamed to let the light in on the room, when anybody calls, lest they should see how mean our chairs are."

"The chairs appear to me to be good chairs enough," replied Mr. Arnold. "Perhaps they don't look quite as well as they did, before we bought the new carpet, for its freshness makes them seem a little dull by contrast. But for that you are to blame, you know, Mary."

The wife bit her lip, and made no reply. But, on other occasions, she returned to the subject, until Mr. Arnold, who hated to be "bothered," as he called it, surrendered for peace sake.

The new chairs, like the new carpet, pleased Mrs. Arnold for a while. But, in time, they ceased, like it, to make her contented; and she now began to see, for the first time, that the furniture of her best chamber was unworthy of her.

"James," she said, "your newly married sister is coming, on Tuesday week, as you know. But the bedstead, dressing-bureau, and wash-stand of our spare room are shocking, they are so out

of fashion, and so scratched. I wish you would new furnish the chamber. It's disgraceful to put a bride into such a place."

"The furniture was thought very fine," replied her husband, "when we purchased it, on setting up housekeeping, ten years ago. I am sure, Mary, you were quite proud of it."

"But we can afford better now," stoutly answered the wife, "and what was fashionable then, isn't fashionable now. Your sister will think the meanness is mine, for she'll never believe its yours, as men generally let their wives have their own way in such matters, especially if they are doing well, as everybody knows you are."

"Well, well," said Mr. Arnold, a little annoyed, "do as you like. I suppose you'll have it out of me some day, and you might as well get it now."

"And the old furniture," added the wife, by way of a concluding argument, "will answer for our chamber, while that which we now use I'll give to the children."

It was not long subsequent to this, when one of Mrs. Arnold's female friends, who was married like herself to a successful business man, set up a one horse carriage. Instantly Mrs. Arnold herself began to wish for a carriage. She had been healthy enough before, by the aid of an occasional walk, but now she discovered, all at once, that both she and the children required riding as an exercise. In short, she was discontented once more, and she gave her husband, as usual, no peace, till he gratified this new desire. Not that she stormed, or even had the sullen; but she looked discontented, sighed, and often regretted the want of a carriage; and so, finally, Mr. Arnold began to believe that her health would eventually suffer, if it had not already.

The carriage kept her contented for an unusually long time. But when she had called on all her acquaintance in it; taken all her relatives and friends by turns out in it; persuaded Mr. Arnold into letting the man who drove wear a sort of livery; and had a new harness bought, and then a lighter carriage for herself and her husband to use exclusively, she began to be discontented again. The truth was one of her set had just moved into a finer house, and Mrs.

Arnold wanted immediately a new and larger house also. off; and when once a thing ceases to be new, Mrs. Arnold ceases to be contented with it.

She has just succeeded in obtaining this fresh desire. But how long it will satisfy her we cannot say; certainly not until this time next year; for, before that, its novelty will be worn In truth she will never, let her get what she may, remain contented long. Who does not know a Mrs. Arnold?

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THE MODERN LAZARUS.

BY J. THORNTON RANDOLPH.

I.

It was a hot, breathless, August day in New York. The hour was high noon. Yet, beneath that vertical sun, a blind beggar sat asking alms by the way-side.

His worn dress, though scrupulously clean, betrayed the utmost poverty. His hand shook with palsy as he held forth his tattered straw hat for alms. On his bared head, bald on top, but with a few thin, grey hairs around the edges, the vertical sun poured down its fierce heat pitilessly. Poor old man!

Suddenly a splendid equipage drew up to the side-walk, and a portly, pompous man descended. Could the mendicant have seen that face, he would scarcely have ventured to solicit alms; and now, when he did, his extended hat was rudely rebuffed.

"Get out of the way, get out of the way, where's the police, I wonder," cried the millionaire, in a quick, testy voice, rudely pushing the old mendicant aside.

An officer, who happened to be within hearing, stepped immediately up, and was obsequiousness itself. He shook the beggar roughly.

"Come, be moving," he said. And observing that the old man hesitated, but whether from weakness, or to arouse pity he did not stop to inquire, he gave him a push, adding, "off with you at once!"

The aged mendicant resisted no longer. Feeling his way with his stick, he arose, and was soon lost to sight in the hurrying crowds, which even on that summer day, poured ceaselessly along the streets.

But, as he went, though his tongue was silent, his heart was not. He thought of his early life, when, in a distant land, he had been prosperous and happy: his hearth shared by a sympathizing wife, his board surrounded by lovely children.

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Then he recalled the misfortunes which had driven him, in his old age, into exile; the fever ship where his remaining grand-children had died; and the first day of utter beggary, type of many a day since when he had landed on a foreign shore. As these things rose before him, he groaned, "how long, oh! Lord, how long."

II.

JOSTLED, and often almost overthrown, the mendicant had nevertheless succeeded, at last, in advancing several squares. He had now reached a point where it became necessary to cross Broadway. For some time he hesitated, the ceaseless roll of vehicles disheartening him; but finally there was a lull, during which he thought he might venture.

He had achieved about half the distance, when a pair of proud, high stepping horses approached at a rapid rate. The liveried coachman, perceiving the beggar, drew partially in. But his imperious master, always impatient of delay, at this angrily spoke up.

"Drive on, drive on," he cried, sharply. "What business has the old rascal to be in the way. He'll jump quick enough when he hears you on top of him."

He did jump quick enough too: but it was the wrong way. Catching the sound of the horses' hoofs, he had turned his sightless eyes toward them; and then, for the first time, the coachman saw he was blind. To pull up again was the work of a moment, even though the servant knew he was disobeying orders. But it was too late. The mendicant, losing his presence of mind, had sprung the wrong way; had fallen under the horses' feet; and was run bodily over before the impetus of the carriage could be stopped.

He was not killed instantly. He had a recollection of being picked up, of hearing a crowd

around him, and of recognizing the voice of the rich man whom he had vainly implored for alms an hour before. "Humph," that voice had said, "he seems done for. A doctor would do no good. Some of you carry him to the hospital, and say that Alderman Brown sent him there."

Then the sound of carriage wheels rolling off, and of those proud horses, mixed itself with the murmured voices of the crowd, until all became a vague dream. When the mendicant was lifted on a rude, temporary litter, he was seen to be totally insensible. When his bearers stopped at the hospital he was discovered to be dead.

III.

THE next day was Sunday. The rich man, the pompous official, had quite forgotten the incident of the preceding morning.

At ten o'clock his sumptuous equipage was at the door. For he respected the decencies of society, and went duly to church, his richly cushioned pew being in a fashionable, up-town, Gothic edifice. And while he lolled back in his corner, calculating the chances of a rise in stocks, or speculating on the complexion of poli-

tical parties, his liveried servant waited outside, with his coach and horses, that all might know how exemplary a Christian Alderman Brown was.

Punctually, at five minutes past ten, the rich man entered his carriage, which immediately moved off, the horses stepping stately, but with some restraint, as become the day.

Presently a plain hearse, containing a coffin of the commonest description, and without a solitary follower, crossed from a bye-street; and the coachman was compelled, for a moment, to draw in that it might pass. It was the poor-house hearse. Need we say who was in that coffin. And thus, for the third and last time, the millionaire and mendicant met.

Did we say for the last time? We recall the word. There is yet another meeting in store for them. But a great gulf will roll between the beggar in Abraham's bosom, and the extortioner, nay! murderer afar off.

For the Dives of the parable was not the last of his kind. Many a Lazarus still lies at rich men's gates, denied even the crumbs they seek, and with only dogs to lick their sores.

THE EMIGRANT.

BY MISS LOUISE OLIVIA HUNTER.

"Poor lady! She seems to grow weaker and thinner and paler every day," said old Bertha Eeling, as she entered the sitting-room of Mrs. Clinton's cottage, after an afternoon's light and pleasant labor in the garden, the result of which had been the garnering of a basket full of ripe, red currants. The words, though spoken to herself, were uttered aloud, and quite forgetful of her mistress's presence, Bertha took a seat near a small table, and for some moments rested her head musingly against the snowy white-washed wall of the apartment.

It was a strange and new sight to see Bertha Eeling idle even for a moment—to behold the hands whose tireless activity had long been a proverb, now lying listlessly in her lap, and the busy, bustling mind whose favorite axiom was, "take care of the minutes and the hours will take care of themselves," now totally unmindful of the flight of time, and the numberless household duties yet to be performed ere the shadows of night closed in.

At any other period, this sudden dreaminess on the part of her old nurse and servant might have called a smile to the face of Mrs. Clinton, who, seated by her work-stand, gazed silently upon the unusually gloomy countenance of Bertha. But not the slightest semblance of a smile now played about the lady's mouth, and her eyes slowly filled with tears, which she strove, though vainly, to force back. At length, with an effort, she broke the silence.

"Does Mrs. Rosenberg seem any worse to-day, Bertha?" was her query, in a voice that slightly trembled.

Bertha started, as if for the first time conscious of Mrs. Clinton's close proximity—then with a deep-drawn sigh, and an ominous shake of the head, she replied, "ah, yes, ma'am—the poor thing can't last long, depend upon it. She has been walking in the garden with her little girl for near an hour this afternoon—and I watching her all the while—and her step is so feeble! more than once she was obliged, as from weakness, to rest upon the grass beneath the shade of the old cherry tree, and then as she turned her face toward me, I saw that it was very white—paler even than I had ever seen it before. And then, too, there's a bright red spot

upon her cheek, which will tell its own tale ere long."

Mrs. Clinton's countenance increased in sadness of expression, but without observing it, after a brief pause Bertha continued—

"And there's that girl, Katrine, who came with Mrs. Rosenberg from Germany—I'm sure she doesn't half do her duty by the poor lady. Why, every spare minute she can get, away she tramps to the village to gossip among folks that haven't anything better to do than to listen to her nonsense! Just so it has been with her to-day. Instead of staying at home to mind her own business and wait upon her mistress, who its quite certain wont trouble her long, she's gone off on one of her customary frolics, and there's no knowing when she'll get back again."

"I should suppose," remarked Mrs. Clinton, "that such conduct on the part of Katrine would oblige Mrs. Rosenberg, however unwilling she might be, to discharge her."

"Ah, ma'am, but that she will never do, and Katrine knows it well," rejoined Bertha, "she knows that Mrs. Rosenberg has a perfect repugnance to strangers, and that rather than part with her she will put up with all sorts of tantrums. Shame on the creature! to take advantage of a drooping, delicate lady like that—whom she ought to love and do everything in her power to serve."

"Why, Bertha!" exclaimed Mrs. Clinton, and a partial smile for an instant wreathed her lip, "this is the first time I have ever known you to trouble your brain about any of our neighbors, I am really inclined to be jealous of the place Mrs. Rosenberg occupies in your thoughts."

"No—that you're not, Miss Amy, "for by this latter name—which Mrs. Clinton had received in infancy, when Bertha, then a comely young woman, had held her in her arms at the baptismal font—the old nurse now continued to address her mistress, "that you're not—for you know that your own kind heart feels as deeply for the lady as mine does. Ah! Miss Amy, dear, if you could only manage to become acquainted with Mrs. Rosenberg—I am quite sure it would do her a world of good, for she must be very lonely with no one for company but that little child, and with the thought always before her that her

death-bed may be surrounded by neither friends nor kindred."

"But you know, Bertha," replied Mrs. Clinton, in a tone of sadness, "it is quite impossible that I should again seek her friendship. Have I not already shown her every neighborly courtesy in my power, and have not all my endeavors to gain her acquaintance failed? Surely, being well aware of all this, you cannot imagine that I would intrude where my presence is not desired?"

"And you are right, Miss Amy, as you always are. But I cannot help thinking that if she knew you she would be glad to have such a friend. To be sure when I carried the grapes you sent her she *did* thank me with a cold and stately air; and when I gave your message that you would be happy to have her call upon you, she never even said that she would do so, or expressed a wish that you would break the ice. But I am convinced now that she had her own reasons for acting as she did, and that she very unjustly regards you, Miss Amy, as one of those who would become intimate with her merely for the sake of prying into her former history. But bless me! there's five o'clock striking, and I've got supper to get ready, and the kitchen to scrub, and the currants to stew for the jelly to-morrow—and ever so much more to do before bed time." And with her mind recalled at once to a sense of the awful responsibilities resting upon it, without further parley Bertha hastened away to the fulfillment of her tasks.

For half an hour afterward, Mrs. Clinton remained sitting where Bertha had left her, absorbed in deep and earnest meditation. All her womanly sympathies were strongly enlisted for the lonely invalid neighbor who was the subject of the foregoing conversation; for the sorrowing and desolate her heart ever throbbed with compassion, for her own spirit had been no stranger to heart anguish—and who so well fitted to sympathize with earth's afflicted, as the one who has known and felt the burden of similar griefs?

But a short time before Mrs. Clinton had moved as a brilliant luminary in the gay circles of fashion. She was the daughter of an opulent merchant, and her early years had passed in the full enjoyment of all the luxuries that wealth could procure, or refinement crave. Beautiful was Amy Welden in the first bloom of womanhood, and her's was loveliness of person united to that of a superior and highly cultivated mind. When in her twentieth year she became the wife of one whose fortune enabled her still to continue the star of those circles she had all her life been accustomed to frequent, and whose kindred mind

was well fitted to appreciate the treasure he had gained—the world loudly applauded her choice, and the young wife resigned herself to those bright, sweet visions of a cloudless future. Three years passed away with scarcely a shadow to darken their horizon, when, by a single cruel blow, the hitherto happy wife and affectionate daughter found herself a widow and an orphan. A few months previous Mr. Clinton had engaged largely in speculation, and imagining from previous experiments that the present ones must likewise prove successful, his father-in-law was induced to endorse notes for him to the amount of nearly all that he possessed. The unexpected and complete failure of these schemes, with their attendant visions of utter ruin to both himself and the husband of his only child, came with overwhelming force upon the proud spirit of Mr. Welden. From the moment that the intelligence reached him he sank into a stupor, from which all efforts to rouse him were ineffectual; and three days afterward he breathed his last, insensible to the wild grief of his daughter and her broken entreaties for one word of blessing from his lips. Immediately after the burial of Mr. Welden, the changes that had taken place became apparent to the eyes of the whole world. His dwelling and effects were sold that creditors might receive their due, and the splendid, tasteful mansion, where she had resided since her marriage, was no longer the abode of Mrs. Clinton—but to a secluded cottage in the outskirts of the city the once wealthy merchant and his gentle-hearted wife, removed. Had the flight of fortune been her only motive for repining, Mrs. Clinton could have borne the trial bravely; but the loss of her beloved father had wrung her soul with the bitterest anguish, and added to this she had soon another cause for grief. Beneath the combined weight of agony at the sudden prostration of his worldly hopes, and remorse at the death of his father-in-law, of whom he almost seemed to consider himself as the murderer, Mr. Clinton's spirits daily drooped—and scarcely had they become settled in their new abode when a fever seized his brain, and in a few days death put an end to his mental and bodily sufferings.

And the young and still beautiful Mrs. Clinton was now alone—the world looked coldly upon her when she no longer ministered to its brilliancies, and none cared for, or pitied her sorrows, save her old nurse, Bertha, who still clung to her midst all the darkness by which she was surrounded. Bowed to the earth as she already was with sorrow, the strange indifference of those whom she had always regarded as friends, stung the sensitive heart of Mrs. Clinton still more

deeply, and it became her earnest wish that she could retire to some small village, where she might ever be secure from meetings with those who in the time of adversity had deserted her; and she felt also that her wounded spirit needed the consolations of solitude. After an examination into her husband's affairs, it was found that from the wreck of his fortunes there was still preserved a small cottage near the distant village of Cedarville, and Providence having thus, as it were, placed in her grasp the means of gratifying her desires, Mrs. Clinton instantly prepared for a removal from the city of her birth. The cottage which was henceforth to be her home, was diminutive in size, but large enough for comfort and convenience. It was pleasantly located, with a garden abundant in fruit trees and adorned with shrubbery—being situated about a quarter of a mile from the village itself. Here, at the time when my story begins, Mrs. Clinton had resided for nearly three years, during which period she had found it requisite to employ her needle constantly, as the only means of providing her little domicile with necessaries. The good people of Cedarville were ever glad to avail themselves of the assistance of so proficient a seamstress, and she had continually on hand as much work as she could conveniently accomplish. Bertha was her only attendant, and a more useful, provident, and thoughtful one she could nowhere have selected—for she was devotedly attached to her mistress, and did everything in her power to serve her.

Though often urged to mingle with the society of the village, Mrs. Clinton restricted her intercourse with it as far as civility, and the pursuance of her daily occupation would admit. For but one of her neighbors had she ever evinced the least interest, and that neighbor was Mrs. Rosenberg, who for about six months had occupied the next cottage, the garden of which adjoined her own. The history of this lady had long been a matter of conjecture and curiosity among the inhabitants of Cedarville, for none knew whence she came, nor what were her means of support. She persisted in secluding herself entirely, never walked farther than the limits of her garden, and her sole associate was her child, a lovely little girl of three years old. During her frequent visits to the village, where she daily went to procure stores, Katrine, the servant of Mrs. Rosenberg, constantly underwent a system of quizzing as to the mystery which seemed to envelope her mistress. But either she knew nothing of Mrs. Rosenberg's former life, except that she was from Germany, and had lost her husband very recently, or was wise enough to

feign ignorance upon the subject, for from Katrine nothing farther could be elicited. The appearance of Mrs. Rosenberg had, as we have said before, deeply interested Mrs. Clinton. The lady had evidently once possessed striking beauty, but her face was now very pale, and it ever wore a shade of melancholy, and seldom beamed with a smile, save when the little girl came bounding to her parent's side, and then the mother would stoop to meet her caresses and return them with an impassioned warmth, that betrayed the existence of a tender and loving spirit. At first Mrs. Rosenberg's peculiar gracefulness and dignity of mien, attracted Mrs. Clinton's attention, for her neighbor certainly could boast that nobleness of carriage, which a queen might envy. The little one also, the beautiful and fairy-like little Mina, as she was called, soon won her notice, for Mrs. Clinton was extravagantly fond of children, and she resolved to become acquainted with both mother and child. The resolution was put in force, but as the reader may have gathered from Bertha's conservation, it was a total failure. Still despite the apparent hauteur of the stranger lady, and the repulse which her kind efforts met with, Mrs. Clinton's interest in Mrs. Rosenberg decreased not, for she felt, that it doubtless arose from motives such as the old nurse assigned. Day by day she still watched her neighbor, and as the weeks passed on, her increasing melancholy and apparent bodily weakness, the nature of which plainly betrayed itself in the painful hollow cough, that frequently racked her delicate frame, continued more than ever to call forth the sympathy and interest of Mrs. Clinton.

But Mrs. Rosenberg seemed perfectly indifferent to the circumstance, that she possessed so near a neighbor, and indeed quite averse to having the fact placed before her view. Her little girl appeared to be more sociably inclined, for one day she crept slyly through an aperture in the fence, that divided the two gardens, and softly approaching Mrs. Clinton, who was busy weeding a flower-bed, the little creature cast a shower of rose-buds in her lap, and then clapping her tiny little hands gleefully, while a sweet, ringing laugh burst from her lips, she bounded playfully and hastily away. This occurred but once, however. No effort at acquaintanceship was ever again manifested on the part of the child, which was as a matter of course attributed to the mother's counsel and influence.

Upon the day on which my story commences, Mrs. Clinton's reverie was at last interrupted in a very extraordinary and unexpected manner. She was startled from her musings by a succession of shrieks, as of some child in the most

poignant distress. Her first thought was for her little neighbor, Mina Rosenberg, and hastening to the door of her dwelling, she looked anxiously forth in the direction whence the sounds proceeded. Upon the grassy sod beneath the same cherry tree before alluded to by Bertha Esling, she now beheld Mrs. Rosenberg lying prostrate and apparently bereft of consciousness. The little Mina knelt by her side, weeping and wringing her hands, and from time to time giving utterance to those wild, piercing cries of anguish! Fearful lest the lady might be dying, and knowing that she was alone, Mrs. Clinton resolved to throw aside all prudential considerations and hasten to her aid. The next moment she stood beside Mrs. Rosenberg, endeavoring to soothe the child, and using every means in her power to restore the mother, who, she saw at a glance, had only fainted. Bertha, who had by this time discovered her mistress' absence from home, now came to her assistance, and the two managed to convey Mrs. Rosenberg into the cottage, where, after gently placing her upon a couch, Mrs. Clinton sent Bertha back again to her household duties, thinking it best to await by herself her neighbor's return to reason. Those earnest endeavors for her revival at length succeeded—and when little Mina saw the color slowly ebbing back to her mother's cheek, and heard the first faint sigh of returning consciousness, she cast her arms lovingly and thankfully around her new friend, overwhelming her with kisses and child-like exclamations of gratitude.

At first Mrs. Rosenberg seemed scarcely to comprehend her situation, but when she saw a stranger bending anxiously over her couch, the memory of her sudden illness flashed across her brain, and turning her face from the inquiring gaze, that rested upon it, in a feeble voice she called for Katrine.

"Katrine gone, Mamma," lisped Mina, in broken accents, raising herself on tiptoe to imprint a kiss upon the transparent hand of her parent, "but good lady—dear lady came to see my mamma."

It was an awkward moment for Mrs. Clinton, for she understood that simple, childish appeal to the invalid. Feeling that it was perhaps necessary to say something to justify her intrusion, in as few words as possible she related all that had passed, and at the conclusion she said, "your servant is still absent, madam, but as I know you to be averse to the society of strangers, if you think, that you can do without farther assistance, I will now leave you."

Mrs. Rosenberg had listened attentively while she uttered these words, with her dark and

strangely brilliant eyes riveted full upon the face of the speaker; and as Mrs. Clinton ceased, and turned to depart, she caught her hand, and pressing it to her lips, murmured, "do not go—stay with me!"

Surprised and affected, Mrs. Clinton again took a seat by the bedside. "Believe me, lady," she said soothingly, "I would gladly be your friend, while, at the same time, I know and appreciate your motives, in so long declining my proffered friendship——"

"Forgive me," interrupted her companion, feebly, "I now feel, that I have deeply injured you. When I first came to this village, I learned that there were many, who would fain have become acquainted with me, for the sole purpose of gleaming the history of my early days, and I wrongfully ranked you in that class. But never till to-day have I looked into your countenance, and I am now convinced that beneath that frank and noble exterior could not possibly lurk aught of those meannesses, whose atmosphere I have so dreaded. Often and eagerly have I longed for one true friend—and you—oh! tell me, will you indeed supply that longing?"

When Bertha Esling again entered Mrs. Rosenberg's cottage, to call her mistress to supper, she was somewhat surprised to find the invalid seated in an easy-chair, her hand resting affectionately in that of Mrs. Clinton, with whom she was conversing with ease and earnestness, while upon a low cushion at their feet sat little Mina.

During the brief period they had been together, each had completely won the confidence of the other, and when Mrs. Clinton related the tale of her trials, the tears of her companion flowed freely at the recital, while in return she gave her own sad history, of which it is here necessary to insert but a brief sketch.

Mrs. Rosenberg was the only daughter of the rich and influential Count Von Eigenheim, whose extensive possessions lay in the flourishing town of W——, in Germany. Her father died when she was little more than twelve years old, and his title and vast estates being without reserve inherited by his son, his daughter was left dependent entirely upon the kindness of her brother. At the time of his parents' death, Karl Von Eigenheim had entered his twenty-fifth year, and he was in every respect the opposite of his generous and noble-hearted father. Sordid, avaricious, and narrow-minded in the extreme, he seemed never to have experienced the feelings and impulses of youth. From earliest childhood he had evinced a passion for hoarding; gold was his idol, and to attain it he would have made any sacrifice that the world could justify. And to

such a spirit was entrusted the guardianship of a young and beautiful sister!

Clemence Von Eigenheim grew up and became a lovely and loveable being. Her brother ever appeared to regard her with fondness, and he certainly was proud of her dazzling beauty—but alas! his love for her was only similar to that of a merchant for the goods contained in his warehouse; for while Count Von Eigenheim gazed with delight upon the glowing loveliness of Clemence, his thoughts ever reverted to the price which that beauty would bring, and he would exult over anticipations of the time, when he should be relieved of the burden of his sister's support, and when that sister should be led from her ancestral halls as the bride of him who could deck her brow with the rarest and most costly jewels. Clemence knew not of the projects that thronged her brother's mind—and society had not been adorned by her bright presence more than three months, ere her heart was given to one fully capable of valuing the gift. But alas! Gustorf Rosenberg had little wealth of his own to offer her, save the wild, true love with which he regarded her. A small estate was all that he possessed, and yet Clemence was perfectly willing to resign all worldly honors, and live in obscurity with the one her heart had chosen. When the first intelligence of her engagement reached him, Count Von Eigenheim became perfectly furious. He caused his sister to be locked within her own chamber, and declaring his intention of never giving his consent to her union with the one she loved, he bade her prepare, within a week to marry the Baron Steinwald, a man old enough to have been her father, but whose riches, in Karl Von Eigenheim's opinion, compensated for his defects. The result was, as might be expected. Clemence eloped with Gustorf Rosenberg; and to escape the wrath of her brother, which they both felt might, at the first opportunity, be visited upon them, Rosenberg sold his little property, and emigrated to the United States, where, in one of the principal cities, he engaged in mercantile pursuits. For several years they lived very happily, but misfortunes at last overtook them. Rosenberg was seized with a lingering fever, which terminated in consumption, and he died, leaving his wife and child to struggle through the world, alone and unprotected, and devoid of the means of maintenance. The death of her husband gave a shock to both the health and the spirits of Mrs. Rosenberg, from which she felt that she should never again fully recover. Her only wish was now for retirement, so she chose a residence in the secluded village of Cedarville,

while by the sale of some valuable jewels, which had been left her by her mother, she found herself in possession of a sum sufficient for her support for several months. She knew that she had not long to live—that the same disease, which carried her husband to the grave, was now gnawing also at her vitals: and though she feared not death, the thought that, at her decease, her little one would be left dependant upon the charity of a cold and heartless world, made her still cling eagerly to life.

From the day on which she received Mrs. Clinton as her friend, Mrs. Rosenberg grew rapidly worse, and when at last she consented to the entreaties of the former, that a physician should be called in, his instant decision that, ere another month, earth would no longer be her abode, threw her into a state of the deepest distress, for she could not bear the thought of leaving her darling child with none to watch over and care for her. But He who "tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb," and who is the never-failing friend of the widow and the father of the fatherless, had in the time of need raised up an earthly protector for the little Mina. In that hour of anguish, when the first prediction of her early doom reached the ear of Mrs. Rosenberg, a soft hand tenderly and sympathizingly clasped her's, and she heard a sweet voice say, "you must give your little one to me. I love her as my own already, and will gladly still love and watch over her, when her parent is no more."

A gleam of indescribable joy lit up the countenance of the mother, as she listened to those soothing sentences, and gratefully pressing the hand of Mrs. Clinton, she replied, "words may not tell, dear friend, how deeply I thank you for that blessed promise. With the assurance of a protection for my child, when I am gone, I am now ready and willing to die whenever my Maker shall see fit to summon me."

That summons came ere the month had quite drawn to a close. For a week preceding the death of Mrs. Rosenberg, there were constantly intervals when her mind wandered, and then her wild fancy revelled amid the scenery of her far-distant fatherland. Once more she would seem to roam her ancestral halls, a frolicsome, thoughtless child, the pet and pride of all; then reverting to the history of her early and condemned love, she would allude pathetically to the hour of her departure from her native land—to the time when she had looked her last upon the grey massive walls and moss-grown turrets of Eigenheim Castle, the home of her joyous childhood. And tears were in the eyes of all that listened, as they contrasted her early hours

with those she had latterly passed, while as they thought of the period, when, surrounded by worldly grandeur, she had willingly forsaken it to share the humble fortunes of Gustorf Rosenberg, their hearts were filled with admiration of

that nobleness of soul which led the sufferer to set aside the temptations of wealth, and to look with coldness upon the glitter and pomp that might still have been her's.

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THE WHITE HOUSE UNDER THE ELMS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SUSY L--'S DIARY."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 50.

CHAPTER VI.

BUT Miss Humphreys—he was quite ashamed to find that she was still talking about the poets; that she had, in all probability been talking all the while that he had been observant only of what passed out there in the neighborhood of the light and cheerful figure. He would make up for it now, he resolved. He would listen to her; yes, indeed! she should see that he could listen, and with some life in him too! He no longer had lead in the place of arterial blood! He was a new man. What was Miss Humphreys' remark?

"Oh, I was saying that——"

That was all he heard; for a bird-like voice out in the hall was saying—"Davy has come! He came at noon. It was this that made me late."

"Has Squire Hurlbut, of the Plain, a son at Hanover?" inquired Frank of Singleton. He came too in the with the question, while Miss Humphreys was yet speaking to him.

"Yes; David, his oldest boy; a fine fellow."

Singleton could speak now; partly because he liked helping Miss Morse wind her silk floss; partly because, since Amy came, there was life and stir and comfortable talking in all the rooms. People left their chairs now, standing about, or sauntering from room to room; and had ease and grace in them. They went out into the hall to see what all that renewed chirruping among the girls meant.

"It means that Davy has come—Davy Hurlbut!" said pretty Mary Morgan.

"Ain't you gladder than a kitten, Lou? gladder than a hundred kittens?" asked Clarissa Jackson. She was standing by the rest. She pretended to sew; but, in truth, she only jumped and laughed a little in the midst of everything that was said; only put her cunning little foot out, pretending that she would trip Mrs. Humphreys, as she sailed along, and rejoiced and did mischief until she stabbed a finger with her fine needle. She made great ado about that; but it was only an extension of the fun.

"When he comes to our house, I shall hide his hat so that he can't go home," said she.

"He can't get over to your house, either, Cad; and then what?"

Cad didn't speak. She had not spoken since Davy's arrival was broached. She had had enough to do with her sewing, and with trying to swallow quietly the untold quantities of delight that kept rising in her throat. She didn't swallow them though. They sent a beautiful, rosy light to all her features, and, it even seemed, to her whole being.

Singleton still helped Miss Morse wind floss; a skein of blue they were winding now; the other was orange. They, at the same time, chatted and laughed about the old coat and the awry cravat Singleton wore. He always wore old coats, he liked them best; he wore them with positive glee when there was a little hole in the elbow. He always wore awry cravats, too, and smashed Kossuth hats; for, besides liking them best himself, Miss Morse liked them; liked to see him wearing them. She told him so with very sincere, very friendly eyes on his face; and he believed her. Merry Clarissa Jackson liked the old hat and coat. This was not of so much consequence to Singleton; still it was something; for Clarissa was a dear sort of girl. She loved Miss Morse, too; loved to cuddle close to her, once in a great while, and be quiet, and talk of serious things; she oftener chose to set the smashed hat in a jaunty way on her own bright hair; to catch hold of the bows of Singleton's cravat and pull it farther aside; or to run her little finger point into the hole at his elbow; and then throw her arms around the one she loved best, Amy, for a good laugh.

"Singleton!" called she, in the midst of the floss-winding "Singleton, come here. Come here, Miss Morse, good Miss Morse. I want to kiss you."

"Me? want to—want to kiss me?" asked Singleton, bustling, and throwing the floss from his hands with comical, admirably feigned haste. "I'm coming, Miss Clarissa."

"Ha! yes, and I want you to come. I've got a—I want to tell you something. Come here and stand by me and Amy."

They came, making their way amongst the

chairs and ladies that were so close. Miss Morse kissed her, Singleton twisted her fingers a little, when she would be shaking hands in a cool way.

"And now," said Clarissa, while spirited conversation and laughter went forward, "let me mend your coat. It's a shame! 'He has no wife to mend his clothes.'" She shaped her little patch of white, thin muslin, out from the end of the cap-string she had been hemming; she moved him about until he was standing right before her; holding his arm right; and then she sewed the patch on, stabbing him outrageously, of course. She never came with a needle so near him or any genuine mirth-loving body, that she did not make start and show grimaces by stabbing him.

"Hazeltime, come out here where Miss Clarissa and I are; where it is cooler," said Singleton, rubbing a smart just given by Clarissa's needle.

Good! Don't you suppose Frank gave thanks? Indeed he did. Don't you suppose he had far-off-like determinations about how he would stand by Singleton and help him out of it, if he ever saw bears worrying him? Yes, indeed, he had, some where in his brain. For Miss Humphreys had just come to fill Miss Morse's corner of the *tele-a-tele*; she was just saying—"what a lovely day, isn't it?"

It was nothing to Amy that Frank was there; that only the balustrade, on which his hand lay, was between them; that he threw himself with living force and spirit into their jollity, and had the gayest, raciest humor of all; that, without a word to her, he took her worsted work up from her lap, held it in his hand and looked the buds and flowers over, talking busily, all the while, with the rest; or that, when she spoke, if he still had his face toward another, still looked the buds and flowers over, he seemed to listen for whatever she would say, seemed indeed to listen after she had done speaking; or, in point of fact, this *was* something, that he listened to her. It brought back a degree of the old annoyance that she had already felt many times since our gentleman began to cross her way. She liked to speak and act without premeditation; to feel as if she lay the words and the deeds upon the half indifferent, half friendly air, which after tossing them and dallying with them one little moment, would let them off into space; so that it would be, afterward, much as if the words had not been spoken, or the deeds performed. Frank ought to have seen this, skilled as he was in all manner of philosophical learning. He did not, however. And hence he was at a dead loss when he saw that she turned away from him a little, then a little more; and then, soon after, a little more;

that she pouted a little with a grieved expression intermingling; and that, pretty soon, she took up her work, said something about going to find her mother, and vanished without a word to those who tried to keep her.

To Frank this was a blow, an actual, hard blow—to his self-esteem, his love of approbation, and to certain other knightly qualities, right worthy of better usage. To the rest of the group it was loss of a goodly portion of vitality, as it were. Clarissa summarily packed her "duds," as she called her sewing implements, in her basket, and went after Amy to the back parlor. Singleton put his arm through Hazeltime's, and led him out into the yard amongst the flowers. But the sun was still venomous; the sandy walks, the dried borders, the yellow flowers seemed bristling in his beams; so that they were glad to make haste back to the hall; Singleton in the good-humor he appeared always to retain; Frank discomfited; discomfited the more that Miss Humphreys, erect and stiff in her heavy green and gold silk, stood there now with her arm through Miss Morse's arm, waiting to accuse them all together of desertion. The poor girl did her best to get something facetious and agreeable out of it; she did her best to make herself agreeable. Singleton bore it well enough; since he had Miss Morse close by; and perhaps he would have borne it well enough under any circumstances; because he was a winsome gentleman, who never had anything to say of honey or patience, but who yet was always gathering them, always laying up plentiful stores. Frank, on the other hand, knew by long pains-taking all the means and appliances of a rich and beautiful life. A part had come to him by reflection, a part by studying the philosophers and Jesus Christ; and he had sought the more earnestly to win them, because with his nerves that were so easily jarred and put out of tune, with his quick blood that went from heart to brain with such high impatience, he had sore need of them to help him to uniform manifestations of "patience, long-suffering and charity." They failed him sometimes, and in what we are accustomed to call "little matters," too, as we have seen. If the mood lasted until he felt that it had given hurt to his own spirit, or to another, with close self-upbraidings he called himself a dog! a baby! who could not bear annoyances so well as a baby could bear them. One good came abundantly to him from such experiences; the good that is the sole *legitimate* end of whatever suffering and disquiet we feel—renewed lowliness of heart, and faith, and love; in other words a diviner life.

"Mr. HAZELTINE—Mr. Singleton," said Mrs. Humphreys, designating the places of those two gentlemen at table. They were near Miss Morse and Miss Humphreys' places, of course. Mrs. Humphreys' place was near, moreover; and Judge Humphreys! The Judge had come in now from the business that had kept him in court all the afternoon. The Judge! yes, indeed! and now would Mr. Hazeltine have tongue? salad? ham? Mr. Singleton—Mr. Singleton would have the goodness to make himself at home, and just help himself and Miss Morse; aye, and other ladies too who had empty plates. Mrs. Crane and Mrs. Jackson, would Mr. Singleton offer them ham, or whatever they would like? Mr. Hazeltine would certainly not refuse his wife's coffee; would certainly not refuse the salad. What did Mr. Hazeltine think of Swamscott? Which village did he think prettiest, East Swamscott, the Plain, or the Bridge? Would his daughter offer Mr. Hazeltine more cream for his coffee, or more sugar; he feared it was not agreeable.

Singleton—rare good fellow that he was—he heard all that was said with a still, good-humored relish; ate with a good relish and helped every body, even Frank. He helped him to bread, which the Judge had overlooked to the blank consternation of all the Humphreys.

"We must be a little more attentive to our guests," said the Judge, with a reproachful glance at his wife, and giving each word a place apart from its fellows.

Miss Humphreys said—"too bad!" and, as was seen by her quick looks of impatience, blamed both father and mother. Mrs. Humphreys colored, dropped her eyes and blamed herself.

Amy was at the lower end of the table, close by her mother's elbow. Afar off from Hazeltine; but he heard every sound of her voice. She knew that he did. She did not look at him; but she knew that his hands moved sluggishly, as if supper were a matter of secondary importance. It provoked her. She was glad that the Judge teased him; that all the Humphreys teased him with their devoirs. She hoped he would learn thereby to keep *his* devoirs away from others; or away from her who had no patience with them. She hoped he would, some way get entangled with the Humphreys, as if he were a green fly; that Judith Humphreys would one day, ere long, catch him and hold him, for life, as if she were a—oh, as if she were another fly; that was all. She laughed so merrily at the thought, she said such gay things to her mother, and to all who were near her, that Clarissa

Jackson said to her—"I must tell you, Amy Hurlbut, that I think you are a little crazy. Isn't she, Mrs. Hurlbut? Did you ever see her so wild before? Would she be so wild now, if she were not a little, the least in the world, crazy?" Mrs. Hurlbut knew, that, for some reason, her daughter had the nervous tumult; which, if she were alone, would find its truer expression in tears. She spoke to her in a quiet way, therefore, and said—"Amy, my child, Davy will soon come for us. He is to come early, you remember."

The mild voice, the glance of the mild eye stilled Amy. There was no longer outward laughter, or inward vexation.

Davy came. And when he came, he was surrounded, petted, and passed from hand to hand. Clarissa Jackson, who was his cousin, both on her father's and her mother's side, begged to just kiss the ends of his fingers; and she did. Miss Humphreys stepped forward, at this stage, to make a formal bow, to take his fingers and shake them a little, not with love, not with gladness; she had little genuine love, little genuine gladness in her at any time; she had this one intention, poor, vain child that she was!—to give all those young girls, and, above all, to give Hazeltine a chance to see her superior breeding, acquired during her year at Charleston Seminary, and her winter in Boston. She would show them that! She did; but Singleton said inwardly—"poor girl!" and half pitied her. Amy looked on in a still, thoughtful way, wondering why anybody in this world should take so much pains as Judith and all the Humphreys did, when there were vastly easier, vastly more becoming ways of getting along. She too half pitied Miss Humphreys; and wished that she could make herself more loveable, since she tried so hard. Amy was too young, she had looked too little upon life under its metaphysical aspects to know, in a positive way, this truth—that to try so hard was the sure method of defeat. She had, however, the quick intuitions, the well-organized brain, in which the self-esteem inherited of her father, rightly counterpoised the love of approbation that came from her mother, and, above all, the sedative, the religious, the ennobling home influences, which Miss Humphreys had not, to serve her in the stead of experience and philosophy. She had had many little lessons like this from her mother; lessons which, coming in the hour of need, impressed her more than many a long sermon from the pulpit would do.

"Mother!" would Amy say, when she was a child, "I don't believe Cousin Clarissa likes me

one bit. She wouldn't sit with me to-day. She sat with Caddy Tracy, because she had on a new, pretty pink frock. I wish I had a new pink frock like Caddy's; and then Cousin Clarissa and all the girls would like me."

"My little daughter, that was a poor thought," replied Mrs. Hurlbut, drawing Amy up before her, and holding both her hands in her's. "Bright pink frocks must soon grow old. We must never depend at all upon bright pink frocks. We must never think of wearing them to make Cousin Clarissa, or any one like us. If Cousin Clarissa, or any one appears not to like us, we must not be distressed about that. We must keep quietly by ourselves, and look down into our hearts, our feelings, and see whether they are calm and right. We must see whether our hearts are so clear of everything that God dislikes, that He can dwell in them and love us dearly, and call us His children. This is all we need to do, my daughter. For if we love God and seek Him, 'all these things'—friendship, love, peace with our associates—'shall be added unto us.' But if we seek these first, forgetting God and letting Him go from us, we miss them and deserve to; for we are very weak, vain and wicked. Remember this, my daughter—love God; keep your heart so pure that it will be a fit dwelling-place for Him, all holy as He is; be gentle and loving toward everybody; and leave the rest to follow in its time."

Miss Humphreys never heard maternal advice like this; but of contrary influences she had a plenty. Mrs. Humphreys never indeed said—"do your best, Judith, dress your prettiest, speak your prettiest, to make people admire you;" but this was the covert inculcation of all her training; and we have seen how sad it was; how foolish and how little happy it had made her child.

CHAPTER VIII.

FRANK and Davy Hurlbut were downright glad to meet. They remembered each other at once, although they had had only a few hours together, and those nearly a year ago. But they were good hours—passed with other, congenial ones—hours filled up with sincerity and manly cheerfulness, so that they remembered them, and would remember them while they lived; would remember them with the more pleasure, the farther they went on in life, especially if they went on till they came to the down hill part, the decline.

Now Amy could bear that; could bear to stand apart and see what friendly, beaming looks went to and fro between the young men, and to hear them chatting and congratulating, as if they

would never know when to be done. She drew on her gloves quietly, as if that were her only concern, save speaking a few low words now and then to Cousin Clarissa, who held her bonnet and mantilla for her. But, in truth, it wasn't her only concern. On the contrary, her heart was leaping tumultuously, like a glad, young fawn; because she saw how well Frank liked her Brother Davy, and how well Davy liked Frank. This was all, best reader. Amy said to herself then and afterward—in her still chamber that night, when she found that the joy still clung to her—she said that it was solely on darling Davy's account; that she had certainly disliked Frank Hazeltine all along, and had had no patience with him.

"Yes, indeed! the reader knows that this was true. The reader believes, as Amy did, that the pleasure was all on Davy's account. Or perhaps the reader does not believe; and will not, without this intimation—that there was good and sufficient cause for Amy's impatience, for her so-called dislike; a cause which Amy knew, which the writer knows, but which the reader does not know; and must not, on any account, at this stage of our story; since, at this stage of the actual affairs, no one knew, Amy and one other alone excepted.

Frank and Davy, as they talked, came into that part of the room where Mrs. Hurlbut and Amy were standing. In what a glow was Davy! how proud and happy were his looks, as he turned them from Frank to his mother and sister, and from them to him! It was the ardent, the ambitious *young* man's gratitude and love toward the self-possessed elder, who was traveling the same road with him—the road that went up, up to the beautiful temple on the rugged hill, the temple called Knowledge—who had indeed traversed the whole way, back and forth; had taken rest in the temple more than once; and who now had the unassuming goodness to come back, and speak kindly to him and inspire him for the journey, as it were.

"You have been introduced to my mother and sister," said he to Frank; "but I wonder if you know how good they are. I wonder if you—" speaking to Mrs. Hurlbut and Amy, "know how good he is." They laughed heartily; and one could see it in every look and motion of Amy and Frank, that now the stiff barrier that had been between them was gone; gone, at least, for the time. Perhaps its secret cause, the mystery already alluded to, would again supervene; and then perhaps Amy would to go work busily, putting up a new barrier, ten times more impregnable than the old. But if that did come, it

would be the fearful work for her; of that one might be sure.

"Have you been at our place?" pursued Davy.

"No."

"No? But you must come to-morrow. You see, Hazeltine, I know a path—you haven't found it, I know; no one finds it, it is so sly. But it is a wonderful path. We'll find more beauties and marvels than we would in going round the world by any other route; and, at last, we'll come to the thriftiest trout region that can be found anywhere."

"Hazeltine's eye kindled.

"You will come?"

"Yes, thank you!"

"Come early. The morning is the best time. You will come early?"

"Very early; at eight."

"Thanks!"

Now Davy's eye went searching through the groups of ladies for something, or somebody. They had already started on the same search several times before, since he came. Amy knew that he was looking after Cad Tracy. She knew moreover that Cad, like a fluttering bird, had betaken herself, on Davy's arrival, to the wing of her mother, who, since supper, had kept her place near some good but unattractive women, the same that Mrs. Humphreys, as before mentioned, had bestowed in the farther corner of the back parlor, when they came. And there the dear girl should be, undisturbed, Amy thought. She should not meet Davy there in that large company, where were many already curious in her and Davy's affairs; already on the watch to see whether they would meet there; and if they

would, to see how they would meet. Amy would save her, she determined, as she herself would wish to be saved under like circumstances. She would hurry Davy away; he could far better go to Mr. Tracy's now, when the moon was shining.

"Come, Davy," said she, her hand on his arm.

He was accustomed to obey Amy's least word, her least touch. He looked back a little on his way through the hall; was a little thoughtful; until he too, as is probable, thought of the moonlight meeting. For he suddenly brightened. He gave lively good-bys on the right hand and on the left; pelted Cousin Clarissa a little with a white tulip broken at the gate, after she had pelted him *not* a little, first with a red tulip, then with capsules from which the leaves had fallen. He kept Hazeltine with him along to the carriage; and thus it happened, that, when Judge Humphreys, at his daughter's birth-day, hurried to help Amy into the carriage, Frank was beforehand with him, and placed Amy on her seat, in a way, as if she were a dowry feather and he a good breeze.

For the rest, Davy talked all the way home, of Hazeltine, of the evening 'spent with him at Hanover the last year—it was on the occasion of a reunion at the house of one of the professor's; after he reached home, when he was left a few minutes alone with Amy, he lay his hand on her shoulder, blushed deeply, and, at first, with a husky sort of whisper, talked of Cad Tracy; and afterward, in the early moonlight, he kissed his fingers at Amy, who had accompanied him a little way, and then hurried, that he might soon come to the little brown gate of the little brown house where the Tracys lived. (TO BE CONCLUDED.)

JEANNE DE CLAIRMONT.

BY JAMES H. DANA.

I.

IN an apartment, in the spacious hotel of Marshal d'Estiguy, toward the close of 1851, was a lady of doubtful age. She sat before a mirror, occupied attentively in giving the last touches to her toilet, and abusing her careless maid. Madame de Brissac belonged to that class of women, who have so long practised the arts of dissimulation, that they have succeeded finally almost in deceiving themselves. To say that her heart was cold, that her whole life was an intrigue, gives but a faint idea of her selfishness and perfidy. Yet her manners, like most Parisians of her rank, were polished, and even winning; while art had effected so much, not only to conceal the approach of age, but to heighten her charms, that she looked almost young and pretty.

Madame de Brissac had been, for two years, a guest in the hotel of Marshal d'Estiguy, of whom she was a distant connexion. The marshal was rich, gouty, and renowned, three things which gave him the right to be testy; but Madame de Brissac had resolved that he should marry her, notwithstanding his ill-humor. Her design had been so skilfully concealed, and her plans so adroitly carried out, that the marshal was actually on the point of proposing, when the arrival of his niece, the Countess de Clairmont, and her daughter, had diverted his thoughts and postponed his design. Perceiving this, Madame de Brissac, with consummate art, had determined to absent herself, for a while, from his parlor, in order that he might feel the loss of her daily gossip, as well as of the accustomed hand to place the cushion for his gouty feet. It was now the second day of this voluntary seclusion.

Suddenly, and just as Madame de Brissac had given the last touch of red to her cheek, a knock was heard at the door. Rising in alarm, and hastily shaking out her dress, she advanced to meet the intruder, a thin, lynx-eyed man, with hair slightly grizzled, the Baron des Tourbieres.

"Ah! baron," she exclaimed, putting on her best smiles, "it is an age since I saw you. How have you been? And how are our dear friends, the marshal, and his guests, especially the pretty Jeanne?"

The baron glanced around the room, and smiled
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grimly before he replied; but whether at the open boxes on the toilet, or at this question, we cannot say. Madame saw both glance and smile, and bit her lip; for she felt that the baron was one of the few she could not deceive.

"The marshal," replied the baron, with his usual courtly bow, "has had one of his worst fits of gout."

"Poor man!" exclaimed madame, but her face brightened, for she saw, in this, the success of her scheme.

"The countess and her daughter," continued the baron, almost imperceptibly elevating his eyebrows, as he saw this, "are with him constantly, however; and the latter especially, the pretty Jeanne, as you well call her, seems to gain rapidly in his favor."

Consummate a dissimulator as Madame de Brissac was, she could not conceal her disappointment and rage at hearing this. She broke out angrily,

"Jeanne de Clairmont is a hypocrite," she said. Then, recollecting herself, she again bit her lip, and was silent. The baron, fixing his eyes on her, as if enjoying her torture, proceeded,

"I fear your ingenious absence is less felt than you thought it would be. The first day the marshal appeared delighted with his niece, yesterday he was enchanted with her, this morning he even talks of her marriage."

"She will not be easy to marry," replied madame, her face suddenly brightening, as if that one word had been a specific to recover her.

"Why so?"

"There is a certain story current concerning her—"

"Little Jeanne! What, already calumniated!"

"Poor girl, brought up with such negligence and levity."

"Negligence! Her mother has never quitted her for a single day."

"For a single day, perhaps not! But the story does not say that it was in the daytime."

"Jeanne embarked in a nocturnal adventure! What nonsense! At her age people sleep at nights; a serenade, a charivari would not awaken them. But have a care; if that charming young girl is continually at the marshal's side nursing

and amusing him, he will think no more of marrying you."

"That alarms me but little."

"Oh! what a mistake. In two days your place may be filled. An intelligent woman should never, my dear madame, run away from a man, unless he is able to run after her. The marshal will grow peevish at your absence, and become, in revenge, all the more enchanted with Jeanne. But I am not your dupe. You do not tell me all. You have another reason for remaining here."

Madame de Brissac, at these words, showed signs of embarrassment. "Well," she said, pettishly, "you have guessed aright. Yes! I have met a person whose presence makes me uneasy. The day before yesterday, I was going early, according to my custom, to visit my poor old——"

"That sort of thing is quite thrown away upon me—mere waste of time."

"What, sir! you do not believe that I went, the day before yesterday morning——"

"Oh! I believe that you went out early—very early. But I totally disbelieve in your visits to poor old men."

"You always turn my charity and piety into ridicule. But your Madame de Clairmont, whom you so greatly admire!—she is as devout and charitable as I am."

"Yes, but after another fashion. She is devout for herself; you are devout for others."

"She goes to mass every morning, as I do."

"She goes, but she never says, 'I have been.' Whilst you always say, 'I have been,' and I am not very sure that you go."

"Sir, this is becoming intolerable," said madame, rising indignantly, and, for a moment, almost choked with rage.

The baron saw he had gone a little too far. It was not his purpose to quarrel with Madame de Brissac, as he happened to be her debtor for twenty thousand francs, and was without the means, at present, of payment. Whether, indeed, he would ever have the means, was a question. Both madame and himself tacitly acted as if he never would, and was not even to be asked; she, by using him as a genteel spy and assistant in her plans, he by aiding her whenever he could. But though the baron hated her, in secret, all the more for his slavery to her, and could not resist taking revenge by tormenting her occasionally, as he had just now done, it was no part of his plan to push things to extremity. So he said, dropping his sneering tone,

"Nay! my dear madame, I mean no offence. Come, we know the world too well to quarrel about little things. You have obliged me with

a loan of twenty thousand francs, and promised to have me made a prefect, or receiver general, as soon as you are Madame la Marechale. Accordingly, you have but to command, and I will serve you; and as for your secret, which a chance betrayed to me—I will keep it."

"My secret!" exclaimed his listener, with an incredulous toss of the head.

The baron smiled one of his grim smiles again, as he replied, looking straight at his companion, whose eyes fell before his gaze. "Once for all, let us not try to deceive each other, for it would be useless. Your secret is that you gave Arthur a *rendezvous* in the Pavilion at Redcastle; at sound of the hunters' voices, Arthur, fearful of compromising you, leapt from the window——"

"Be silent!—be silent!"

"His gun went off—he fell bathed in his blood."

"Could I help him?"

"You need not have fled from the spot and left him there to die."

"Arthur!"

"You abandoned him to death, because to call for succor would have been to denounce yourself—because you are a prude, in short, and because—to a prude, the life of a man is as nothing compared to her own good fame."

"But I mourn him! I weep for his fate!" angrily retorted his companion. "Do you not see it?"

"And therefore I pity you. But, as you know, I am not the sole possessor of this secret. The bunch of heath, forgotten by you in the pavilion, served as an indication——"

"Yes—that fatal bouquet—doubtless some one had seen me gather it—and every year, on the anniversary of Arthur's death——"

"You receive a similar one. Next week, if I recollect correctly, completes the fifth year!"

"Who sends it to me?"

"Do you suspect any one? His mother, perhaps?"

"Lady Redcastle? No, she has never left Scotland."

"A friend of Arthur's? Had he not an intimate friend, a young Frenchman?"

"Yes; I told you, just now, that I had met somebody. It was he!"

"He! who?"

But, at this instant, there was a knock at the door, and, the maid entering, announced a new visitor, in whom the baron recognized Hector de Renneville, the young man whom he had heard, in confidence, the day before, that Jeanne de Clairmont was to marry.

Handsome, graceful, intelligent, rich and well

born, Hector was, indeed, one whom any girl might be proud to win; and the baron had not been surprised to notice, that, at mention of the young man's name, Jeanne had colored with evident delight; but he was astonished, on the present occasion, to see the embarrassed flutter with which Madame de Brissac welcomed him, notwithstanding her efforts to appear composed. "Ha!" said the baron to himself, "can it be possible she loves him also?" But he dismissed the idea almost immediately. Yet, for once, the baron was deceived by his fair accomplice. Madame de Brissac loved de Renneville passionately, and all the more passionately, because she had been forced to conceal her feelings. As yet she knew nothing of his engagement to Jeanne. But a playful remark by the baron, during the interview, intended by him to sound her feelings, as the suspicion of her love recurred again, revealed it to her; and she became almost livid with suppressed rage and jealousy, so that she could, with difficulty, control herself, till de Renneville, having exhausted the limits of his formal call, departed.

"Well," said the baron, as soon as the door had closed on the young man, "you don't seem to like it. Yet they will make a pretty pair! If the marshal should forget you, in the meantime, Jeanne will be heir to his vast wealth; and this handsome dandy will have made quite a speculation in his bride. Faith! I advise you to go and see the marshal at once. You are losing more than one point in the game."

With these cutting words, conveying a double meaning, the baron rose to leave. Madame de Brissac, unable to trust herself with words, haughtily inclined her head in adieu; but her eyes fairly flashed fire, on her visitor, as he left, bowing low even to mockery.

The countenance of the lady, during the next five minutes, would have been a study for either tragedian or painter. Jealousy, rage, hate and revenge were depicted, in succession, on her face. At last a look of gratified malice supplanted all others. She had evidently formed her plan.

"I have it," she said, with a smile of triumph, "General St. Iriex will be here to-day; for it is his morning to call. He is a pompous, meddling old fool, an old comrade of the Marquis de Renneville, Hector's father. I will drop, in the course of conversation, as if accidentally, an allusion to Jeanne's nocturnal adventure. He will catch at it, I know, for he has open ears always for gossip. I will affect to hate myself for being so imprudent, will tell him it is nothing, will say I could bite off my tongue. This will

only inflame his curiosity. He will insist on hearing all, and I will, with great reluctance apparently, rehearse the whole story, begging him to keep it secret as the grave, especially from the de Renneville, since the heir is to marry Mademoiselle de Clairmont. Before to-night, the marquis will have the whole tale; and that will break off the match, which will give me a double revenge."

II.

THERE was to be a grand dinner at Marshal d'Estiguy's, and the principal guests had already assembled in the saloon. Among them were the baron, Hector, and Madame de Brissac, the latter of whom, the day before, had taken the baron's advice, and renewed her visits to the parlor of the marshal. She was in high spirits, on this occasion, for, having descended to the saloon earlier than either the countess or Jeanne, and before any of the guests had arrived, she had found her host alone, and had so adroitly played on his vanity, that he had been brought to the very verge of a proposal. The explosion, which she was satisfied was about to occur respecting Jeanne, would, she believed, bring him to the point at their next interview. She sighed as she thought of Hector, but, notwithstanding her passion for the young man, she was too much a woman of the world to sacrifice rank and wealth to him. Besides she began to suspect he really loved Jeanne, and, at this reflection, she almost hated him, for the time. The fair Jeanne herself was not present. She had left the saloon, a few minutes before, blushing, yet happy, to bring a pearl necklace, her uncle's gift to the future Countess de Renneville.

"We wait only for the marquis, your father," said the marshal, turning to Hector. "Can any thing have happened? He is not usually late."

"I can't tell what keeps him," replied the son, walking to the window. "Ha! here comes his body servant, crossing to the entrance. Something must be the matter." And, with hurried steps, the young man left the room, to inquire in person.

He returned, almost immediately, with a letter, which he tendered, in some embarrassment to the marshal, saying, "my father excuses himself. He is well. It is unaccountable."

The marshal, always irascible, puckered his shaggy brow at these words, hastily tore off the envelope, and began to read.

"What!" he exclaimed, with an oath, almost at the first word. "Begs to decline—for himself and son—all connexion even with the family. Mademoiselle de Clairmont can explain all. A

midnight rendezvous—*sacre dieu*," he burst forth, rising, and flinging down the letter, while he looked around for Jeanne, forgetting, in his rage, the errand he had sent her on, "what does all this mean? Where is this gipsy? Madame la Comtesse," and he turned stiffly to his niece, "your daughter has made pretty work of it. Read that!"

He kicked, with his foot, the open letter, which the countess, pale and trembling, stooped and picked up. It contained, as Madame de Brissac well knew, though she looked on with admirably affected surprise, the story she had herself rehearsed to General St. Iriex, and which had gone straight to the marquis.

"It is absurd," said the countess, contemptuously, when she had finished perusing the letter. "My child is innocent, I will stake my life on it."

"What is it?" cried Hector, advancing eagerly to her. "Do you speak of Jeanne? Innocent? Who dares charge her?"

His agitation, not less than his defiant assertion of Jeanne's innocence, convinced Madame de Brissac that he loved her rival. She looked away from him, meeting the glance of the baron, which said, "this is your work." Unwilling to encounter that gaze, she walked up to the marshal, who was fuming aside, and blandly and dexterously began to soothe him, though taking care not to moderate his passion at Jeanne.

Meantime Hector had taken his father's letter from the countess, and read it through. "It is false!" he said, when he concluded. The mother, who had been eagerly watching his face, clasped her hands at these words, her eyes looking the gratitude and joy she was too agitated to speak.

"False," exclaimed the marshal, with another oath, and something like a sneer, "do you think your father and me, two old fools——"

"Hush!" said Madame de Brissac, in her gentlest tones, "our dear Jeanne will soon be here. Marshal, pray avoid a scene; you know such things make your gout worse."

"Confound the gout!" growled the old soldier. "No! confound the hypocritical gipsies, that cheat one with their downcast eyes——"

"Nay! nay!" said Madame de Brissac, laying her hand playfully on his mouth. "Not a word more. Let us go to dinner in peace, and afterward, if, as Jeanne's guardian, you wish to inquire into this matter, you can do so, you know. To say nothing else, it is really, my dear marshal, as you must see, not quite the thing to agitate such an affair in my presence," and she looked down modestly, letting her lashes droop over her eyes, so that the marshal grew heartily ashamed of himself.

The countess, though she instinctively disliked Madame de Brissac, felt grateful to her for this proposal, as the idea of having Jeanne arraigned, in so public a manner, was inexpressibly shocking to her. She hurriedly protested, therefore, against a word being said to her daughter at present: and in this Hector sided with her. "Well, well," replied the marshal, thus over-ruled, "have your own way; but to-morrow I'll settle the business, and in few words, I can tell you all. Jeanne goes to a convent, and——"

But his words were cut short, by the opening of the door, and the entrance of Mademoiselle de Clairmont herself, so he finished by a glance at Madame de Brissac, which was as tender as he was capable of, and which assured her of a complete and speedy triumph.

How shall we describe the sweet girl who now entered the room! Jeanne de Clairmont was like a delicate white rose, blooming in its first purity and loveliness. One could not look at her, and believe that even the thought of guilt had ever crossed her mind. Her dove-like eyes, and the ingenuous blush upon her cheek, made even the worldly baron feel a pang of remorse that she was to be the victim of Madame de Brissac. Her dress was faultless, and admirably fitted to her perfect shape; yet it was simple in the extreme. As she tripped lightly across the room, feeling that every eye was on her, and sought refuge with her mother, she looked the very personification of modest innocence. Her lover, for one, needed nothing more to prove that she was traduced. The pearls, for which she had been sent, shone on her fair throat, and Jeanne, observing Hector's eyes fixed on her, fancied he was looking at them, and recollecting the event for which they were destined, she crimsoned with conscious love, and avoided his eye with maidenly reserve.

The dinner, in spite of the efforts of Madame de Brissac, seconded by the baron, passed off stiffly. Jeanne, who felt the uncomfortableness of all around, wondered what was the matter, and often looked inquiringly at her mother. The guests departed, almost immediately after the meal; and, simultaneously with the exit of the last, the marshal announced his intention of retiring. The young girl, left alone with her mother, longed, but dared not, ask what was the matter; and, before she could muster courage, her mother kissed her, bade her good night, and left her to her own thoughts, and to foreboding tears, in which the parent, in her distant chamber, shared.

For, prior to retiring finally, and after leaving Jeanne, the countess had sought an interview

with her uncle, hoping to persuade him that the accusation was a slander. But the marshal was inexorable. She told him she had sent for the gardener, who was said to have witnessed the midnight interview; but he only sneered at this, and repeated his resolution to send Jeanne to a convent, in order to hide the disgrace to his house. The mother, roused at this, eternally opposed the design. A stormy scene ensued. Finally the marshal angrily ordered his niece to leave the house on the following day, and, as a last taunt, informed her of his intended marriage to Madame de Brissac. "She is the only one who really cares for me," he said, "I have none left but her."

While these things were passing in one apartment of the hotel, Madame de Brissac, in another, was congratulating herself on having finally reached the goal of her ambition. The tender pressure of the hand, with which the marshal had parted from her, and the whisper in which he had solicited the honor of a private interview with her in the morning, accompanied by its meaning look, left no doubt on her mind that her victory was assured. She sat before her glass, for more than an hour, slowly preparing her toilet for the night, and smiling, in conscious triumph, at having so skilfully, at one stroke, secured the marshal, revenged herself on her rival, and punished Hector for preferring to herself, "a raw girl," as she contemptuously called Jeanne.

In another apartment, of another hotel, still another scene was going on. The baron, though worldly, was not entirely heartless; we have seen how he pitied our heroine; and, on the dinner party breaking up, he had taken a sudden resolution. "This Madame de Brissac's conduct is frightful, after all," he said to himself. "I am not quite a villain, and cannot see that poor child sacrificed. But then the twenty thousand francs? Ah! there's the difficulty." He walked on, pondering for a while; and then suddenly exclaimed, "ah! I have it. Young de Renneville would give that sum, I am sure, to see Mademoiselle de Clairmont cleared. I am sure she is innocent, for I know women, and no guilty one could look like she looks. I will propose to her lover, to produce, for that amount, evidence of her innocence. I will myself go down to Blois. The deuce is in it," the baron was a decorous rascal, and rarely swore, only indeed in the very highest excitement, "the deuce in it, if I can't win my money, ease my conscience, and exculpate that dear, injured girl all in one."

Accordingly, retracing his steps, the baron followed Hector, rapidly, in the direction of the

de Renneville Hotel, and overtook him just as he was entering the portal. The two were soon closeted together. The lover eagerly closed with the proposition of the baron, with many expressions of gratitude, in his joy and eagerness not stopping to think what a precious scamp he was dealing with, who sold even his good actions for a price, and played the traitor at that.

III.

THE day following these events, the marshal made his formal proposal for the hand of Madame de Brissac. The marriage was arranged to come off within the week; the pair were to take up their abode, for a while, at a country-seat belonging to the marshal; and, in the winter, they were to return to Paris, where the bride promised herself full compensation for all she had endured in bringing her plot to a favorable issue.

On the same day, the countess left her uncle's hotel, to the increased wonder of her daughter, who knew now that something serious was the matter. Jeanne even mustered courage to inquire what it was, but the mother evaded an answer, and as Hector still continued to visit them, and it could be nothing respecting him, as the poor girl had feared at first, she gradually began to recover her spirits, and to persuade herself that some slight quarrel between her parent and uncle, soon perhaps to be adjusted, was the cause of the stiffness at the dinner, and the subsequent removal.

Hector, we have said, still continued to visit the Clairmonts, because he firmly believed in Jeanne's innocence, and was resolved not to give her up till her guilt was clearly proved. He anxiously awaited the arrival of Leonard, the gardener. Accordingly, on receiving a hasty note, one day, from the countess, announcing that he had come, the lover hurried at once to the apartments of the Clairmonts. He found the countess alone, the very picture of anxiety.

"I have sent my daughter out of the way," she said, with a nervousness she could not conceal, "and I have refrained from speaking a word to Leonard till your arrival, for it is your right, if he substantiates this horrid story," and the speaker clutched her hands unconsciously, "to know all, and not to have a perjured tale, prepared beforehand, rehearsed to you."

The gardener was then introduced. He entered with an unwillingness that could not be concealed. He avoided looking at the countess; seemed to suffer positive mental pain; and frequently glanced imploringly at Hector, as if mutely soliciting to be dismissed unquestioned. These signs struck a chill to the heart of the

lover, who knowing that Leonard had been in the Clairmont family for twenty years, and was attached to it warmly, saw, in them, unexpected confirmations of the dreadful tale.

The countess also observed this conduct. Her face became livid with terrible fears; but nevertheless she braced herself for the task before her; and, after a few preliminary questions, in which Leonard showed his evident wish to avoid confessing what he knew, forced him to speak out.

"Since you say I must tell the truth, or lose my place," he replied, at last, "why, I cannot but do as you bid me. A poor man, like me, with a family to support," he continued, glancing apologetically at Hector, "has no choice. Well then, it was in the month of August, a year ago, in the night of the twenty-seventh to the twenty-eighth; I had gone to bed early, for I was to rise before daybreak. Madame la Comtesse was then very ill, and I had a prescription to take to the apothecary at Menars, madame not having confidence in the one at Blois, who, nevertheless, is a very honest man. At about three o'clock I was startled out of my sleep; there was a noise, the great dog was barking. 'All the better,' said I to myself, 'I shall be the sooner ready to set off?' I got up, took my gun, and went to see what was the matter. I slipped behind the shrubbery—I listened—I heard nothing more; then I looked out and saw a white dress crossing a streak of moonlight on the broad walk; I soon recognized mademoiselle's pretty figure; there are none like her for that. I was quite frightened to see her in the garden at that hour; I thought some misfortune had happened, that she had lost her senses; I was going to run after her, when I observed that she was not alone, and that, instead of showing uneasiness or agitation, she was walking cautiously, mysteriously, like a person who had all her reason, and did not wish to be seen. I stood still and tried to make out who was with her. It was difficult, on account of the clumps of dahlias, and of the tall asters, which prevented my getting a good view of him. I made out that it was a young man. At first I had thought, I had hoped, it was the doctor, 'what a fool I am!' said I to myself. 'It is M. Lhomond, who has passed the night beside madame's sick bed, and Madame Jeanne is letting him out by the little garden-gate, so as not to awaken the whole house by opening the large window of the ante-chamber, which is so hard to shut.' So I hurried after them, to ask the doctor himself how his patient was getting on, and if I was still to take the prescription to Menars. But, dear me, when I got near it was

not the doctor at all. M. Lhomond is a short, thick-set man, and this was a tall young man—impossible to mistake one for the other. Still, I had such difficulty in believing what I saw, that I hit upon another invention; I said to myself—it is a pupil of the doctor's, whom he has left to watch madame, for fear of accidents, and mademoiselle is letting him out. But—but—it is not in that manner that one walks with a stranger—a young girl does not treat in that manner a young man whom she sees for the first time—does not.' Madame la Comtesse, do not ask me anything more."

"Leonard, speak," cried the mother, in agony, "I must know everything."

"But, madame—*mon Dieu!* it blisters my tongue to denounce the poor child whom I have seen playing in the garden since she was such a little thing, and whom I loved, craving your pardon, Madame la Comtesse, as if she had been my own daughter. Oh! I love her still—I cannot help loving her; but since that day she does not seem to me like the same——"

"Leonard, my dear Leonard!" exclaimed the countess, whose distress was shown by the great drops of perspiration on her face, "you see what anguish is mine—speak——"

"Ah! madame will suffer still more when I tell her all—and to give her pain, to cause her so much sorrow, when she has always been so good to me, when I owe her everything—it cuts me to the heart."

The countess, at these words, rose irritated from her seat. "Think not of me," she said, "Leonard—I must avert new dangers. Speak, I have courage."

"Ah, Madame la Comtesse, a mother has never courage enough for these things."

"But—perhaps you were in the right, perhaps a pupil of Dr. Lhomond's watched beside me that night, and Jeanne, in the effusion of her gratitude, pressed his hands as she might do those of a friend——"

"Oh! that—I should have understood that! But she was not only affectionate, she was—familiar, tender—caressing; she leaned upon his shoulder, she fondled him—how shall I say—just as my wife does when I go home, or when she bids me good-bye. Ah! I make no mistake, one must love people very much indeed to fondle them in that way."

Suffocating with emotion, she cried, "but—he——"

"From the place where I was I could not see him well. Wishing to get a nearer sight of him, when I heard Mademoiselle Jeanne open the garden-wicket, I jumped over the wall to catch

my man as he passed through the meadow. There, accordingly, I found him, and on recognizing M. Charles Valleray, our prefect's son, I understood everything. I knew that Madame la Marquise had never received him at her house, on account of his political opinions; and I perfectly understood that if the young people loved each other they could meet only in secret, since their parents would not allow them to love each other otherwise. What made me most uneasy was the thought that perhaps I was not the only person who had seen them, and I hastened back into the garden. At the same moment I heard the noise of a window shut. It was in the direction of the Hotel de France, to the left, near the great poplar. That window shut, at such an hour, has always made me uneasy. And so, thinking that this adventure would sooner or later be known and talked of, I asked madame to allow me to leave her service, so as to be out of the way when the thing should be brought up. I don't know how to lie, and that secret weighed heavy on my mind. Nothing less than the orders and entreaties of Madame la Comtesse should have induced me to speak against mademoiselle. I have obeyed with great regret; but—in short, you know all the truth. I hope Madame la Comtesse will forgive me."

He wiped his eyes as he concluded. The mother, sunk in her seat, her face buried in her hands, could not dismiss him. This was left for Hector, who, with a waive of his hand, bade the gardener go. The noise of the closing door in part roused the countess, who burst into a passion of grief. After a while she looked up.

"Oh!" she cried, sobbing between almost every word, "pity me. Leonard has spoken truth. Jeanne is lost, lost forever, how can I call her daughter any more. She is the victim of an unprincipled villain—he has been humbled by my proud mother—and he has thus sought to avenge himself. Go, de Renneville, forget—forget—"

The almost heart-broken mother could say no more. Again sobs choked her. Again she buried her face, shuddering, in her hands, as if even she dared not look on the injured Hector.

But the young man, tenderly approaching her, gently removed the hands from her face. Though startled by the straight-forward, and evidently honest story of the gardener, his confidence in Jeanne was not shaken, for a moment. He felt assured that there was some inexplicable mistake in the affair, which she only could clear up; and he now said this, refusing to surrender his engagement, and entreating that Mademoiselle de Clairmont might be sent for.

The mother's face brightened at his words. Confidence returned, in part, to her also. She looked up through her tears, stifled her sobs, and asked earnestly,

"Do you believe what you say? Do you really think her innocent?"

"I do, I do!" earnestly replied Hector. "Only send for her, and she will clear all up."

The countess, as if a new life had been given to her, rose up at these words, crossed the room, and rang the bell for her daughter.

IV.

"But how can I question her?" suddenly said the countess, turning deadly pale. "I would not—I know not—what questions to put to her," she continued, falteringly, "I fear to enlighten her."

In spite of his confidence, a vague doubt had, nevertheless, lurked at the bottom of Hector's heart. Reason had whispered to him that if the mother believed in the daughter's guilt, he was infatuated to discredit it. But these words showed that, in reality, the countess secretly had faith in her daughter's purity, and had only said otherwise, in consequence of a high sense of honor, and to give Hector entire freedom to withdraw, if he wished.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, joyfully, every shadow of a suspicion now removed, "you don't think her guilty yourself. Thank God!"

He had scarcely spoken, when the door opened, and the innocent girl herself glided in. Jeanne, at the first glance, saw that both her lover and mother had been agitated; the joyous smile, which had lit up her face, died away: she looked anxiously from one to the other, and finally took her place silently, with downcast eyes, at her parent's side.

The countess knew not how to begin the conversation. But she felt that every moment only increased the mutual embarrassment of all parties, and, therefore, in a few words, she led the way directly to the subject. At the name of Charles Valleray Jeanne started in evident embarrassment. Hector, for the first time, now began seriously to credit the tale. His look of agony was indescribable, and the countess, fearfully glancing toward him, and perceiving it, had her own returning fears strengthened, and could scarcely restrain a burst of sorrow. As the cross-questioning went on, for it now became that, the mother suffered too much agony to employ her former tact, and the admissions, reserve, and confession of Jeanne, destroyed, answer by answer, the lingering hopes of her listeners. Mademoiselle de Clairmont did not deny that

she had been in the garden with M. Valleray. She had not told her mother of it, she said, because that would have been wrong; she had promised to keep the secret. She confessed, in reply to a direct question, that he had lavished caresses on her hand, and kissed it, but nothing more: and this she acknowledged hesitatingly, with many blushes, in a whisper almost inaudible. Hector heard all this with feelings indescribable. He walked to the window; then hastily returned; and, perceiving that the countess could scarcely control herself, he approached her, and whispered, mastering his own emotion, as he pointed to Jeanne, who stood apart, trembling, and leaning against a table, pale as death.

"Restrain yourself, look at her. See how sure of herself she is." Then, observing the quick, eager glance, which the poor girl, like a frightened fawn, shot at him, he attempted to smile, and continued, addressing Jeanne, "come, mademoiselle, tell us how it was you treated that handsome young man so well."

These words seemed to flash suddenly a new light on the hitherto puzzled, alarmed, and trembling girl. She looked up, with a bright sparkle in her eye, and said earnestly,

"Ah! the jealous man. Mamma, I will explain it all to you; it is very simple. I wanted to prevent—but, no, I will tell you the story from the beginning. I have already told you it was on the twenty-eighth of August; for three weeks my mother had been dangerously ill—oh! very ill indeed—and for two days she had been delirious, and knew none of us. She had great glittering eyes, which fixed on nothing; and, when I went near her, 'begone, begone!' she cried, with a frantic air, 'your presence is hateful to me!' She said that to me—to me! Only think how ill she must have been! All about her despaired of her life. I saw them lifting their hands to heaven and speaking in whispers, when I was there; and then they looked at me, and 'poor child!' I heard them say. Oh! it was dreadful. At last, toward the evening of that day, she grew a little calmer, and the doctor—who saved her—told us, that if that calm lasted—if the patient could but sleep for three or four hours, he answered for her life. After so many days of despair, this word of hope restored to us all our courage. M. Lhomond went away, and soon after his departure mamma sank into a sweet sleep. Then, without speaking, almost without daring to breathe we three—old Theresa, Fanny, and I—prepared to pass the night. Theresa established herself in a comfortable easy-chair; Fanny, who had already sat up with mamma for a whole fortnight, and who has never recovered

from the fatigue, as soon as mamma got better, she fell ill, and was obliged to leave us. She came to see us the other day; she is going to—"

"Never mind Fanny!" cried her mother. "Go on, and quickly."

"Fanny lay down upon her bed, and I knelt down to pray. Oh! how I prayed that night! I was not inattentive, as sometimes at mass; there was no fear of that! The silence was so profound that one heard nothing but the ticking of the clock; then it occurred to me that the hour would soon strike, and that the sudden sound, in that great stillness, might awaken the patient. I got up, and, walking on tiptoe, I went to the chimney-piece and stopped the clock. I had hardly done this, when I heard Cæsar, the great watch-dog, barking like a mad creature at the bottom of the garden. The noise was still distant, but I heard it coming nearer—coming nearer. Oh, good heavens! I thought, he will come and bark under mamma's windows—she will awake, and all this good sleep will be lost. Without reflecting on what I did, I took a little lamp that was on the table—I looked at Theresa—she had heard nothing; besides, Cæsar does not like her, and would not have listened to her—and I ran down stairs. It did occur to me that thieves might perhaps be there; but I did not feel afraid. Oh! I am not at all a coward! I opened the door, and what did I see upon the terrace? That wicked Cæsar, with a tall young man fast in his gripe! As long as he kept his hold there was no danger, he did not bark; but the young man had a thick cane, and beat him hard, and I saw that Cæsar was likely to let go. It is then he would have howled and awakened the whole house. There was not a minute to lose. So I went up to M. Valleray—it was he—and I said to him, 'take my hand, sir; quick, and be very friendly with me.' M. Valleray at once understood that I came to help him; he seized my hand, and then I spoke to him very kindly—caressing him like this—(with a quick movement she took Hector's hand, and leaned upon his shoulder, then became confused, and went away from him.) With you, I do not dare; how strange! You, mamma—(she placed her hand on her mother's shoulder, and caressed her.) Like this, saying: 'This good M. Charles Valleray, I know him; he is a friend of ours—we like him very much—you must not hurt him, or bark at him. Cæsar, don't be angry—you see very well it is a friend.' In short, all manner of nonsense, which must have made a great impression upon Cæsar's mind, for at last he quietly released the poor young man. I fetched the key of the little

garden-gate, to which I accompanied M. Vallerey, holding his hand all the way very affectionately, because that naughty Cesar still looked excessively out of humor, and I distrusted him. Then I hastened back to the house. Oh! how uneasy I was as I went up stairs! I trembled lest I should hear your voice, and find you awakened. I went very gently into your room! I approached your bed—oh, mamma! what a happy moment was that! God had had compassion upon me—you were still asleep."

The joy of the listeners, at these words, could be no longer restrained. Hector seized both the hands of the countess, who burst into tears, and fell on his neck; while the amazed, and artless girl, pausing in her narration, gazed at them, and said to herself, "well, what is the matter with them."

"Nothing, nothing," said Hector, overhearing her, and embarrassed, seeking a pretext, "only Charles Vallerey is an old school-fellow of mine—you saved him."

"He told me I had. He—the prefect's son—had been at the meeting of a secret society. If he had been caught, he was lost."

"But how had he come into our garden?" cried the mother.

"He had jumped out of the window of the Hotel de France."

"Yes, yes; everything explains itself! That window that they shut," cried Hector, "there is no longer a doubt."

"Dear child," cried the countess, snatching Jeanne to her arms, and, without another word, clasping the sweet girl as if she would never let go, and weeping in a perfect ecstasy of joy, gratitude, and maternal love.

V.

MADAME DE BRISSAC was already in the marshal's saloon, attired as a bride, and waiting only for the civil marriage to be completed, by the arrival of the notary, when a carriage drove up, and Hector, accompanied by the countess, his father, and General St. Iriex, entered. The sudden appearance of these guests, whom he had not invited to the ceremony, surprised the marshal, who looked from them to his bride elect, and from her to them, silently seeking an explanation.

Hector, though not entirely ignorant of Madame de Brissac's character, had never suspected her connexion with the slander upon Jeanne, until after the latter's artless confession. All at once, however, the truth flashed upon him. He left the countess immediately and hurried to his father. For the first time, he now demanded the authority of the latter, for the story respecting

Mademoiselle de Clairmont. Since the dinner at the marshal's, the son had avoided conversation with his parent, on the subject of Jeanne, Hector wishing to wait until her guilt or innocence was established. But now he recounted all which he had heard, and succeeded in convincing the marshal, as he had himself been convinced. The two then went to General St. Iriex, who, after some hesitation, admitted that Hector's suspicion was correct, and that Madame de Brissac had put the tale into circulation, evidently, as it now appeared, to disinherit Jeanne, and secure the marshal's fortune, as well as hand, for herself. The three gentlemen had subsequently returned for the countess, before driving to the Hotel d'Estigny, in order that all the witnesses might be present at the exposure of Madame de Brissac. Their astonishment at finding the marriage ceremony all but completed, was not less than that of the marshal at their unsolicited, and inopportune presence.

Hector was the first to speak. Producing a bouquet of heath, which, to the perplexity of his companions, he had purchased on the way, he walked directly up to Madame de Brissac, and tendered it to her, with a low bow. To the amazement of all, this self-collected woman started, uttered a half scream, and letting the bouquet drop, as if it was poison, stared on the giver, with ashy cheeks and eyes of horror.

"It is the fifth time I have had the honor to present you a bunch of heath," said Hector, pitilessly. "Four times I sent it: now I bring it in person. Madame, your best cards are all played," he added, ironically. "Will you give up the game, and retire, or brave it out?"

But though Madame de Brissac had recognized, by the bouquet, that Hector was cognizant of the death of Arthur; that he possessed the secret, which she had believed no one, in France, but the baron knew; and that she was in his power; and though, in consequence, she had lost her self-possession;—yet it was not long before her consummate hardihood, and the remembrance of the stake for which she was playing, brought her back to herself. She answered the speaker, therefore, with haughty scorn.

"If monsieur means, as I presume, to insult me, he doubtless remembers that, as I am a lady, he can do it without fear of being called to account." But she looked to the marshal as she spoke.

"Gentlemen," said the latter, thus appealed to, his astonishment rising to wrath, "I don't know what gives me the honor of your company. But this lady is about to become my wife, and any slight to her is an insult to me——"

"Your pardon, marshal," interrupted Hector, who still continued spokesman. "We have no desire to insult madame, but only wish her to retract a false tale, which she has put in circulation, respecting Mademoiselle de Clairmont." And, without waiting to ask for permission, Hector proceeded to rehearse the vindication of Jeanne, and to state Madame de Brissac's connexion with the slander.

"I would have spared you this," he said, in conclusion, turning to the bride elect, "but you would not accept mercy, madame. I will spare you what is worse, if you will even now confess."

For a moment Madame de Brissac looked at the marshal, but perceiving that he was still, notwithstanding Hector's story, and the corroboration of General St. Iriex, irresolute, she resolved to continue to confront her foes, hoping yet to triumph, and believing the last words of Hector but a threat.

Her only answer, therefore, was a contemptuous smile, and a movement toward the marshal, as if to claim his protection from further insult.

"Well then," said Hector, looking at his father, who stepped to the door, "let me introduce a gentleman, who arrived from Blois only an hour ago, and who knows more of this matter, the Baron des Tourbieres."

As he spoke the baron entered. Madame de Brissac looked thunder-struck, but evidently was still ignorant of what was coming. Hector continued,

"The baron brings proof what window it was, in the hotel, which the gardener heard shut on the night of the twenty-seventh of August. That window, it seems, is in convenient proximity to the branches of a lofty tree in the Countess de Clairmont's garden. The register of the hotel, of which we have here an attested copy," and taking the document from the baron, he unfolded it at length, "shows that, on the night in question, that room was occupied by Madame de Brissac. She then, it seems, is the really guilty party:—and hence too her knowledge of the midnight interview."

As he finished, he turned to the bride elect. But the latter, from the first mention of the window, had known what was coming, and, with the pride and hardihood of a fallen angel, had braced herself to brave it out. One glance at the marshal showed that her case was hopeless. Yet she resolved, since she must abandon the stage, to leave on his mind, if possible, a lurking doubt of her innocence. She said, haughtily, therefore, drawing her scarf around her,

"I will not reply; appearances are against me. I forgive you your suspicions. Madame

de Clairmont," and she turned to the countess, "knows that a woman may be compromised without being guilty; yesterday her daughter was accused—to-day she is justified. Patience! the moment will come when I shall be justified in my turn. M. Charles Valleray announces his approaching arrival; until then I accept, Monsieur le Marechal, the accusation which purifies your niece. Tell those who have heard that sad adventure spoken of, that everything has been revealed, that my intrigues have been discovered—say, in short, whatever is necessary to justify this young girl. Hasten to destroy my reputation; it is your interest, it is perhaps mine! Every signal injustice is followed, sooner or later, by signal reparation; and this reparation, which shall be a glorious one, I await it calmly and trustfully. Farewell, Monsieur le Marechal; I would have given you my existence, but I do more, I give you my honor!"

The countess, at this assurance, was stung into speaking at last.

"Your honor," she sneered.

Madame de Brissac was already on her way to the door; but she turned, and said, with a hiss like a serpent.

"Less pride, madame! The world will say of me: She has a lover. It says the same of you—who have none." Thus, true to her character to the last, slandering by an ironical doubt, where she dare not slander more openly, she left the room. She did not depart wholly unconsoled either, for as she closed the door, she heard the marshal, still not entirely cured of his infatuation, though convinced that she had deceived him, say, with the weakness of old age, "poor woman! they all accuse her!"

It was his last regret after her, however, for the repetition of Hector's evidence, and the perusal of the transcript, gradually woke the rage of the marshal, who now first realized how nearly he had come to being duped. He would not rest satisfied till the countess and her daughter had returned to his hotel. There, a few days after, the fair Jeanne became the bride of Hector de Renneville.

A lady, said to resemble Madame de Brissac, has been seen, lately, at the German Baths. She is not in Paris, at any rate, having vanished from that capital, simultaneously with her departure from the Hotel d'Estigny.

NOTE.—The characters, and most of the incidents of this tale, are taken from a new French comedy, by Madame Girardin, which has created a vast sensation in Paris. The story is known there as "Lady Tartuffe." Rachel appears in it as Madame de Brissac.

"THE LILIES OF THE FIELD."

BY CARRY STANLEY.

POOR Ellen Lee! Her heart sunk within her while her fingers were busied placing a tuft of Parma violets, which she almost fancied gave forth a faint perfume, on a delicate straw colored *crepe* bonnet, or as she wreathed a spray of sweet-brier and apple-blossoms around the face of a pink silk, or with artistic grace hung the snowy water lily, from which she almost seemed to hear the crystal drops fall on the dark green lisse. These marvels of art, which rivaled those of nature in all save the fragrance, brought visions of green fields and running waters to that dull, illy ventilated room; and while her companions were busy discussing the characters of the ladies who would throng in to the morrow's "opening," Ellen was wondering whether the trailing arbutus was still green at the foot of the old oak tree, covered by the last year's leaves, and if the grass was *very* green along the course of the spring, or if the blood-root, and the purple, shell-tinted liverwort, and modest violets, and nodding anemones still carpeted the warm slopes below the orchard.

And again poor Ellen Lee! For the gush of fresh air which came in at the window, opened by one of the pale workers, carried her not only back to flowers, and sunshine, and waters, but to the darkened chamber of the old stone parsonage house, and her father's thin hands raised in their last prayer, and his look of peace and faith, which not even the knowledge that his wife and daughter would now be penniless, could disturb, as he murmured, "if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, oh, ye of little faith?"

Unconsciously to herself great tears were falling on her work, when one of the girls said kindly,

"Are you sick to day, Miss Lee?"

"No, I am quite well, thank you."

"Is your mother worse then?" again asked the other.

But the tears were coming too fast now to allow of a reply, except a shake of the head in the negative, when another said,

"Well, no matter then, we shall soon be over our hurry, and then you won't have to sit so close; you ain't used to it."

This sympathy was more than Ellen could bear. She tossed down the lilac spray which she held, buried her face in her hands, and gave way to a wild burst of weeping. She felt that some explanation was due to her companions for their kindness, so she said in a low voice,

"I was only thinking," and the tears came raining down again, but in a more gentle shower. The two glanced at her black dress and sorrowful face, their lips quivered, and a mist gathered over their eyes, and one placed a footstool, which she had brought for her own accommodation, under Ellen's feet, and the other gave her a little bunch of blue violets, which she had purchased for a few pennies that morning in market, on her way to her work. "Truly there is a poverty that maketh rich."

Ellen arose, the next morning, but little refreshed. An occasional cough from her mother would make her start from her sleep with a palpitating heart, to lie awake watching the dear invalid with anxious eyes; and as the grey dawn came creeping into the room, she moved noiselessly about arranging everything for her mother's comfort during the day.

It was one of those sultry mornings of early spring, which has such debilitating effects on the system after the bracing cold of the winter, that Ellen Lee walked languidly to the work-rooms. How she longed for one breath from the fragrant brown earth, which she knew was being upturned in long, straight furrows along the hill-sides around her old home, or one of the yellow daffodils, from out of its clump of lance-like leaves, which grew under the cherry tree by the big gate. Angry, rebellious feelings were rising in her heart. Why had God taken away her noble father, or so afflicted her gentle, pious mother? why had the old stone parsonage house with its ivy-bound casements, passed into other hands? and with compressed lips and tearful eyes Ellen entered Mrs. Fuller's show-rooms. Here the bonnets were to be arranged; straw colored and lilac, rose colored and green, blue and white in tempting proximity; and as Mrs. Fuller's fore-woman was sick, as she declared fore-women always would be on opening days, Ellen was obliged to take her place.

Group after group of stylish-looking women

and elegant girls, at length came trooping in, filling the large room with gay voices and musical laughter: women, whose only sorrow seemed to be the unbecomingness of a bonnet; girls, whose greatest trial was in the selection of a dress.

Ellen urged the pretty trifles, much too shyly, her employer thought, who missed the voluble flattery which her French fore-woman was accustomed to bestow on her customers; but more than one *parvenue*, with her embroidered purse clinking with gold as she laid it on the marble-topped table, envied Ellen Lee her graceful self-possession.

"I think this will suit your style," said Ellen, to a young lady who had ranged through pink, white and green without being satisfied, and she took up a blue bonnet with a wreath of eglantine.

"Permit me to judge for myself, if you please," was the haughty reply, as the beauty passed her jeweled fingers across the bands of her rich brown hair.

Ellen drew back with tears starting to her eyes, and replaced the bonnet on its stand, just in time to catch the pitying glance of a gentleman who had evidently overheard the conversation. In order to cover her mortification she snatched up a cap by her side, and said to an elderly lady standing near,

"Here is a beautiful breakfast cap, madam, would you not like it?"

"Try it on, mother, and let me see how charming you can look once more," said the gentleman, who drew toward them.

Ellen's nimble fingers soon had the cap on the lady's head, with what the son denominated a "decidedly French touch."

"Irresistible, I declare, mother. Coffee and rolls will be delicious with those ribbons fluttering on the breakfast table."

"How d'ye do, Mrs. Maylin? A beautiful assortment of bonnets this spring, is there not? Why, Mr. Maylin, is it possible you can find any thing at a fashionable milliner's to interest you? I always tell my brother that he comes only to look at the ladies; but we could not accuse *you* of that, you know," and the young lady who had so haughtily rejected Ellen's services, smiled flatteringly as she spoke.

"I certainly thought I had taste enough, Miss Rogers, to admire a pretty woman, even in a milliner's show-rooms; and it is no bad place to study your characters," and Mr. Maylin bowed gravely, and somewhat ironically as he spoke.

Miss Rogers discussed with feminine volubility Sunday schools and Dorcas societies, with the grave-looking, but agreeable young minister, for she had a fashionably religious turn of mind just

then, which evinced itself in a taste for painted church windows, wax candles, and white robed choristers to chaunt the anthems; but Mr. Maylin listened with less interest than usual, for in Miss Rogers' conduct to Ellen he saw that the "charity that suffereth long, and is kind, the charity that vaunteth not itself," was not in her creed.

Throughout the day Ellen Lee was constantly reminded of the difference between the flesh and blood, clothed in simple cotton, and the flesh and blood which the silk-worm and lace weavers had decorated; the stamp of nobility which God had placed upon the soul was not recognized among those republican ladies, for though as in the case of Mrs. Maylin and her son, some had treated her as one of themselves, most looked upon her as a mere machine placed there to minister to their tastes and wants.

Ellen returned home that night faint and dispirited with the fatigue and rebuffs of the day. With all the delicacy of love, she had heretofore concealed from her mother her weariness and disgust with her employment, but now the pent up feelings of months found vent. Mrs. Lee in vain reasoned with her. With a resignation and calm, the fruit of trials and sorrows, which astonished and sometimes almost irritated her more active-minded daughter, she could scarcely comprehend why Ellen was so annoyed by what seemed to her such trifles.

"Yes, mother," said Ellen, bitterly, "there were women there whom I felt in my inmost soul to be inferior to myself, who treated their pampered lap dogs and spaniels with more consideration than they did me. And graceful young girls, who, to look at, one would almost idolize, who measure the worth of a poor sister like myself, by the price of my dress. *These* are the lilies of the field which toil not, neither do they spin," continued she, bitterly, "but God knows that we poor weeds grow hardly enough."

Tears came to Mrs. Lee's eyes as she said, "Ellen, my child, I fear you are fast losing your faith. God help you if that goes, it is all that the poor often have——"

"No, mother," was the quick reply, "not that, for I think the Bible and religion were made for the poor. The rich have no need of them, it seems to me. Even the Lord's Prayer appears almost unnecessary for them. 'Give us this day our daily bread,' need be no cry of theirs in their plenty."

"Ellen, that prayer for 'daily bread' has a deeper meaning than you in your wilfulness give to it. Do you not know that 'man shall not live by bread alone?' that our 'daily bread' is also of

'faith, hope, and charity,' that every temptation overcome, every effort for better things is a part of our 'daily bread?' Does not, 'Lead us not into temptation' apply equally to the rich and poor; and to whom is it so hard to say, 'Thy will be done,' as to the rich man when called upon to give up all that made life valuable, after years of pampered selfishness?"

Ellen Lee bowed her head on her clasped hands as she murmured through her tears, "God forgive me, but I feel sick, body and soul;" but from that day forward, she went about her daily task more contentedly.

"I am very much in want of a seamstress, Mrs. Fuller, can you tell me where to find one?" asked Mrs. Maylin, one morning whilst in the milliner's rooms.

Ellen was standing by arranging some misplaced bonnets, and after some hesitation, she said timidly,

"I should like some plain sewing to do, madam, if you think I would suit, as Mrs. Fuller wants me no longer, now her hurry is over."

Mrs. Maylin, who from the first had been prepossessed in Ellen's favor, immediately engaged her, congratulating herself that it would probably be in her power to render her life somewhat more pleasant, than she suspected it had lately been in Mrs. Fuller's rooms.

Night after night, on her return to her mother, Ellen had some new act of kindness, or pleasing trait of character to narrate of Mrs. Maylin or her son, till one evening she bounded in breathlessly with the exclamation,

"Oh, mother, mother! can't you go to W——, young Mr. Maylin has received a call there. Only think of his preaching in papa's old pulpit; and Mrs. Maylin is going also for a time, and as her sewing is not nearly completed she wishes to take me too. You don't know how surprised she was when I told her about papa, and our living at W——, and I promised to go if you would only go too and visit Aunt Maria."

But Ellen's anticipations were somewhat damped, when about two weeks after their arrival in W—— Mrs. Maylin was taken dangerously ill, and she was obliged to become her constant nurse. Many years of attendance upon her invalid mother greatly prepared her for this new duty; and as Mr. Maylin watched her light form flitting through the darkened room, or saw how soothing her unobtrusive but ever ready attentions were to his mother, the idea more and more strongly fixed itself upon his mind that Ellen would make as good a minister's wife as she had been a daughter.

And then, too, things in the parish did not

seem to go on as smoothly as when he had had Ellen to consult. She from long acquaintance with them, knew more about the Sunday school, the benevolent societies, the wants and dispositions of his congregation than a year could make him familiar with; then her voice too was missed in the choir most sadly, for since his mother's illness Ellen's time had been devoted entirely to the sick room.

Mrs. Maylin was at length convalescent, and Ellen was in a great degree released from her confinement. Edward Maylin thought that church duties went on more smoothly, now that Ellen had time to advise; and as her voice rose rich and clear on the next Sabbath in the anthem, the young minister tried almost in vain, to shut out the visions of love and earthly happiness, which would pass before him in that holy edifice.

During Mrs. Maylin's illness, Ellen too became conscious that she looked forward to Edward's visit to the sick room with strange pleasure; and now that she once more associated constantly with him, a feverish unrest took possession of her, though she in vain struggled for the old calm which had made their intercourse so pleasant.

Ellen's sewing was now resumed, and one June afternoon, when going out for her accustomed walk upon which Mrs. Maylin insisted, she took her way to the orchard which sloped down from the parsonage garden to a swampy piece of woodland at its foot. Here she had gathered violets and yellow cups in the early spring, the pink and white wild honeysuckle a few weeks later, and now a magnificent magnolia tree was the object of her search. A few of the creamy blossoms had been gathered, and Ellen seated herself upon the trunk of a fallen tree to arrange them, but unconsciously sunk into a painful reverie, in which past sorrows and future trials were darkly blended, when she heard herself addressed.

She looked up, and Edward Maylin stood beside her. She endeavored to hide the tears which had started to her eyes, by obstinately gazing at the long, glossy, green leaves which she was ruthlessly stripping from around the flowers; but as the minister took a seat by her, and whispered a few words in her ear, she half averted her face, crimsoned with blushes, and crushed the rich blossoms in her hand till their spicy fragrance filled the air.

Through tears and smiles Ellen at length spoke of the day of their first meeting.

"Well," was the reply, "I cannot sufficiently congratulate myself for having had my eyes opened to the true merits of some of those 'lilies

of the field,' as you called them; for though not at all in love, I had been very much pleased with Miss Rogers."

The next autumn saw Ellen Lee, who in the meantime had resided with her aunt, enter the pretty little church of W—— as a bride, and as she knelt beside her mother and Mrs. Maylin in her accustomed corner of their old pew, she prayed forgiveness for the times when her *faith*

had deserted her. And when she heard the text of the first sermon, preached by her *husband*, "Consider the lilies," as if in continuation of her prayer, she wept tears of thankfulness, and resolved, that although she now placed a different construction upon the words, that through the grace of God, she would never become one of those she had once denominated as "THE LILIES OF THE FIELD."

THE LOAF OF BREAD.

BY M. J. WHITE.

AN unfortunate Lyonesse, the father of a family, was deprived of work by the depressed state of his trade during a whole winter. It was with great difficulty that he could get a morsel of food now and then for his famished wife and children. Things grew worse and worse with him, and at length, on attempting to rise one morning, for the purpose of going out, as usual, in quest of employment, he fell back in a fainting condition, beside his wife, who had already been confined to her bed by illness for two months. The poor man felt himself ill, and his strength utterly gone. He had two boys, yet in mere childhood, and one girl, about twelve or thirteen years old. For a long time, the whole charge of the household had fallen on this girl. She had tended the sick-bed of her mother, and had watched over her little brothers with more than parental care. Now, when the father too was taken ill, there seemed to be not a vestige of hope for the family, excepting in the exertions which might be made by her, young as she was.

The first thought of the poor little girl was to seek for work proportioned to her strength. But that the family might not starve in the meantime, she resolved to go to one of the Houses of Charity, where food was given out, she had heard, to the poor and needy. The person to whom she addressed herself accordingly inscribed her name in the list of applicants, and told her to come back again in a day or two, when the case would have been *deliberated* upon. Alas, during this deliberation, her parents and brothers would starve! The girl stated this, but was informed that the formalities mentioned were indispensable. She came again to the streets, and, almost agonized by the knowledge how anxiously she was expected with bread, at home, she resolved to ask charity from the passengers in the public ways.

No one heeded the modest, unobtrusive appeal of her outstretched hand. Her heart was too full to permit her to speak. Could any one have seen the torturing anxiety that filled her breast, she must have been pitied and relieved. As the case stood, it is not perhaps surprising that some rude being menaced her with the police. She was frightened. Shivering with cold, and crying bitterly, she fled homeward. When she mounted

the stairs and opened the door, the first words that she heard were the cries of her brothers for something to eat—"bread! bread!" She saw her father soothing and supporting her fainting mother, and heard him say, "bread!—she dies for want of food."

"I have no bread!" cried the poor girl, with anguish in her tones.

The cry of disappointment and despair which came at these words from her father and brothers, caused her to recall what she had said, and conceal the truth. "I have not got it yet," she exclaimed, "but I will have it immediately. I have given the baker the money; he was serving some rich people, and he told me to wait or come back. I came to tell you that it would soon be here."

After these words, without waiting for a reply, she left the house again. A thought had entered her head, and maddened by the distress of those she loved so dearly, she had instantaneously resolved to put it in execution. She ran from one street to another, till she saw a baker's shop in which there appeared to be no person, and then, summoning all her determination, she entered, lifted a loaf, and fled? The shopkeeper saw her from behind his counter. He cried loudly, ran after her, and pointed her out to the people passing by. The girl ran on. She was pursued, and finally a man seized the loaf which she carried. The object of her desires taken away, she had no motive to proceed, and was seized at once. They conveyed her toward the office of the police; a crowd, as usual, having gathered in attendance. The poor girl threw around her despairing glances, which seemed to seek some favorable object from whom to ask mercy. At last, when she had been brought to the court of the police-office, and was in waiting for the order to enter, she saw before her a little girl of her own age, who appeared to look on her with a glance full of kindness and compassion. Under the impulse of the moment, still thinking of the condition of her family, she whispered to the stranger the cause of her act of theft.

"Father and mother, and my two brothers, are dying for want of bread!" said she.

"Where?" asked the strange girl, anxiously.

"Rue —, No. 10 —." She had only time

to add the name of her parents to this communication, when she was carried in before the commissary of police."

Meanwhile, the poor family at home suffered all the miseries of suspense. Fears for their child's safety were added to the other afflictions of the parents. At length, they heard footsteps ascending the stair. An eager cry of hope was uttered by all the four unfortunates, but, alas! a stranger appeared in place of their own little one. Yet the stranger seemed to them like an angel. Her cheeks had a beautiful bloom, and long flaxen hair fell in curls upon her shoulders. She brought to them bread, and a small basket of other provisions. "Your girl," she said, "will not come back perhaps to-day; but keep up your spirits! See what she has sent you!" After these encouraging words, the young messenger of good put into the hands of the father five francs, and then, turning round to cast a look of pity and satisfaction on the poor family, who were dumb with emotion, she disappeared.

The history of these five francs is the most remarkable part of this affair. This little benevolent fairy was, it is almost unnecessary to say, the same pitying spectator who had been addressed by the abstracter of the loaf at the police office. As soon as she had heard what was said there, she had gone away, resolved to take some meat to the poor family. But she remembered that her mamma was from home that day, and was at a loss how to procure money or food, until she bethought herself of a resource of a strange kind. She recollected that a hair-

dresser, who lived near her mother's house, and who knew her family, had often commended her beautiful hair, and had told her to come to him whenever she wished to have it cut, and he would give her a louis for it. This used to make her proud and pleased, but she now thought of it in a different way. In order to procure money for the assistance of the starving family, she went straight to the hair-dresser's, put him in mind of his promise, and offered to let him cut off all her pretty locks for what he thought them worth.

Naturally surprised by such an application, the hair-dresser, who was a kind and intelligent man, made inquiry into the cause of his young friend's visit. Her secret was easily drawn from her, and it caused the hair-dresser almost to shed tears of pleasure. He feigned to comply with the conditions proposed, and gave the bargainer fifteen francs, promising to come and claim his purchase at some future day. The little girl then got a basket, bought provisions, and set out on her errand of mercy. Before she returned, the hair-dresser had gone to her mother's, found that lady at home, and related to her the whole circumstances; so that, when the possessor of the golden tresses came back, she was gratified by being received into the open arms of her pleased and praising parent.

When the story was told at the police-office by the hair-dresser, the abstraction of the loaf was visited by no severe punishment. The singular circumstances connected with the case, raised many friends to the artisan and his family, and he was soon restored to health and comfort.

ONLY A RUSTIC BEAUTY.

BY ELLEN ASHTON.

"WHAT a lovely creature."

The speaker was one of two young men, who were sauntering along the road, not far from the little village of Woodleigh, and who, from their dress and air, were evidently city-bred, and probably rich.

"Where?" said his companion.

"Yonder, in that cottage porch, half hidden by honeysuckles. What 'a shape, what a face, and what an almost divine expression in those eyes."

"Pooh," replied his companion, after a contemptuous stare in the direction indicated, "she's only a rustic beauty. I thought, from the enthusiasm with which you spoke, that you had discovered some city belle, up here among the hills: and gad! I was overjoyed at the very thought. I'm tired of seeing girls that can't do anything but milk cows and weed potatoes."

"You're a puppy," bluntly said the other, "and deserve to be jilted, if ever you love, for speaking so scornfully of any portion of the sex. For my part I honor womanhood wherever I find it. And a refined female I revere, with my whole soul, whether she is town or country bred. Conventional polish is one thing; but real ladyhood another: and the latter is as often found in a cottage as in a West End mansion. I'll wager my life," continued the speaker, enthusiastically, "that the soul, which beams from yonder face, is one of heaven's finest mould. Only a rustic beauty! No, sir, she's a woman to love, to worship, to take counsel with, to share your joy and sorrow, sickness and health, poverty and fortune forever, or I know nothing of the expression of a face. I haven't seen so fresh and pure a countenance for years, if ever, though I have often dreamed of such. I'll seek her acquaintance, that I'm resolved on."

"I vow," said his companion, "you're the most romantic fellow I know. But you were always so, Hastings. Take care, however, what you do. Rant about this rustic beauty, if you will, as much as you please; but don't disgrace your name by marrying an under-bred country girl: we're cousins, remember, and I've an interest in keeping our aristocratic lineage pure."

Hastings gave the speaker a look of contempt, but was silent. Shortly after, the walk terminated

at the hotel, where the two young men were spending a fortnight; and for the rest of the day the two cousins saw no more of each other.

Our readers have an idea, from this slight sketch, of the characters of the two young men. Both were lawyers in one of our great Atlantic cities: but both, as is often the case, too wealthy to render labor necessary. They were practically, therefore, men of leisure. Their relationship, and their common social position, threw them together a good deal; but no two could have been really more dissimilar. Hastings was fond of literature, a judge of art, and accomplished generally in the highest sense. His cousin was a fop, and little better than a fool.

Several days elapsed. Hastings, who had made acquaintance, through his affable manners, with several of the best people in the village, and whose native-born stamp of gentility and honor gave all confidence in him, had no difficulty in procuring an introduction to Amy Norton, the fair girl whom he had so much admired. She was the only child of a widow, the early death of whose husband, a clergyman, had left her in comparatively straitened circumstances. The education which Amy had received had been principally imparted at home. Mrs. Norton, however, was a good musician and something of a linguist, so that her daughter was not wholly wanting in accomplishments. But it was in the solid parts of an education that Amy excelled. The thousand things, which every woman ought to know, but which no mere boarding-school education can impart, she had thoroughly mastered. She was qualified, in a word, to be a helpmate, not a costly embarrassment, to whomsoever should be fortunate enough to win her love. Thoroughly competent in household arts, an experienced nurse in sickness, an intelligent companion, a sensible adviser, few girls of her age were as competent to perform so well the practical duties of life. Her grace, her quick wit, and her great personal beauty were qualities, less directly useful, but in their way as valuable. What wonder that Hastings loved this charming girl, or that, in spite of the continued raillery of his cousin, he finally offered himself!

"I tell you, you're a born fool," angrily said that cousin, on hearing the announcement of the

engagement. "You often lecture me, as if I was a school boy; but, gad! you're twice the dunce I am. You'll disgrace the family forever with this vulgar rustic beauty."

Hastings, coloring with indignation, which, however, he suppressed, answered,

"Stay, remember you speak of her who is to be my wife, and don't anger me too far. As for Miss Norton disgracing my family, I for one, consider myself honored by her consent: I have feared, this week past, that I was not worthy of her, that this happiness was too great for me."

His cousin stroked his moustache, and replied,

"Well, I don't wish to quarrel, my good fellow. Since the thing's done, I suppose I must speak respectfully of your intended wife: but really you can't deny that she hasn't a penny, doesn't know how to polk, and was never at a fashionable ball in her life. How *will* she behave."

Hastings gave a look of withering contempt at his cousin, and, for a moment, seemed to disdain answering. At last, however, he concluded to speak.

"Once for all," were his words, "let me say that you and I have different ideas of what is desirable in a wife. You wish wealth, fashion, and empty accomplishments. I wish a loving

heart and cultivated intellect, and with these two, even though conventional accomplishments may be absent at first, I shall have, in a few years, a more elegant lady for my wife, even according to your own standard, than can ever be obtained in your way. Miss Norton has already all the solid qualifications for a life-long companion, with a good constitution in addition, no light thing in a wife. She has beauty and intellect, and will soon acquire every necessary accomplishment. You'll probably marry Miss Adams. She's an heiress, and was educated at a fashionable school. But, I challenge you, in five years, to see which of our wives will have the lead in society."

The conversation here ceased, nor was it ever renewed. The two young men married the women of their respective choice, and the five years, spoken of by Hastings, have just closed. The fashionably bred lady is an insipid valetudinarian, so peevish that her husband has no happiness, or even comfort. But the star of the first society, in the great city of —, the most intellectual, accomplished, graceful and beautiful woman there, is the wife of Hastings, she who was once called contemptuously **ONLY A RUSTIC BEAUTY.**

"MUSIC AND LOVE."

BY JAMES H. DANA.

It was a picture of more than Arcadian beauty. A lovely greenwood bank, covered with rich, thick grass, and in the back-ground a lake and silver cascade, the rustling of leaves and the murmur of water filling the air with music.

Three persons occupied this picture, reclining on the grass, as the lords and ladies did in Baccaccio's garden. They were dressed in the picturesque style of their time, which was that of the seventeenth century. The ladies were attired not very dissimilar indeed from the present fashion. But the gentleman, for there was only one, wore a deep lace collar, rosettes in his shoes, and other ornaments of the luxurious and still half poetic age, that succeeded to the steel clad era of chivalry.

The lovelier of the two females reclined in the centre of the group, while a female companion assisted her to hold a music book. But her eyes, and what magnificent eyes they were! as often strayed to the cavalier on her left, who, on his part, seemed to study her fair countenance far more earnestly than the page. At times they joined in a duet, the gentleman accompanying the lady on his guitar: and at times they chatted pleasantly together; but they were as frequently silent, looking now at the landscape, and then furtively at each other, blushing when their eyes encountered, and looking suddenly off, only to detect each other looking furtively again.

It needed no sage's eye to divine, from these signs, that they were lovers. The Lady Beatrice was, indeed, one whom it would be impossible to know without loving. Born and brought up in a distant province of the South of France, she knew nothing of the hollowness of courts, or the follies of fashion, but was all innocence, gaiety, grace, health, modesty, and beauty. Her life, until the last few weeks, had been spent in doing good among the poor on her father's estates, in

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going to the chapel, in reading the ponderous old romances in the castle library, and in living among the woods and fields. But, all at once, a new world had opened upon her. One day, while about to step into the little boat, with which she and her foster-sister navigated the lake, her foot had slipped, and she had fallen in. The water was deep, and she disappeared instantly. Her companion, frightened out of all self-possession, could only scream, so that the Lady Beatrice would, perhaps, have been drowned, if the scream had not arrested the attention of a cavalier who happened to be passing, and who, rushing to the spot, rescued the beautiful girl, and bore her to a neighboring cottage.

When the Lady Beatrice, restored to consciousness by the peasant's wife, and by the exertions of her foster-sister, would have thanked her preserver, he was gone. But, a few days after, when she had entirely recovered from her accident, she revisited the scene of it; and here encountered the stranger. He bowed respectfully to her, and ventured to ask after her health. She could not but answer kindly, and even add, in a few embarrassed words, how grateful she was to him. The interview, thus begun, was protracted, and led to many others. There was such a sympathy between the mind of the Lady Beatrice and that of the cavalier; he was so respectful, yet so eloquent, so handsome, yet so courtly; the time they were together seemed so short, and the hours they were separated appeared so long, that, at last, and unconsciously almost, the interviews grew longer and more frequent, until finally the Lady Beatrice went every day to the green bank below the waterfall, and there met, every day, the cavalier, though without any formal appointment. She did this, without interference from any one. Her mother was long

dead, and her sire, occupied in affairs of his own, never visited this secluded part of his estate, and never missed his daughter if she was present at the usual twilight meal.

"You are sad, to-day," said the cavalier, after a long interval of silence.

"And you? You are sad too," she said, tenderly.

"Is it not enough to make me sad to see you so?" was the evasive reply. "Oh! Beatrice, dear Beatrice," he whispered, looking up into her face, "can you not confide in me?"

Her foster-sister, during these words, had moved away to a little distance, ostensibly to pluck flowers, but really to allow the lovers to converse, for she knew what it was that preyed on the mind of her mistress, and she thought that, perhaps, the cavalier, if he discovered it, might suggest some mode of relief.

"Oh! don't ask me," said the Lady Beatrice, at this appeal. "It will break your heart, as it is breaking mine. That is, that is," she stammered, blushing, "if what you say of loving me is true." And she burst into tears.

The cavalier made no reply, for a while, except to put his arm reverentially around his companion, and draw her head gently toward him, till it rested on his bosom. Then he soothed her with kisses and murmured words of endearment, till the tears ceased gradually, and she was in a calmer mood. After this, it required but a little persuasive tact, which he seemed to possess by nature, to win her secret from her.

It was a heart-breaking one, as she had said, and as she now often repeated, with renewed sobs, during the recital. Like many other noble maidens, the Lady Beatrice had been betrothed, in childhood, to the heir of her sire's favorite companion in arms; and now the time had come, as her father had announced to her the preceding evening, to fulfil this contract. This was the secret.

"I had utterly forgotten that I was under such an agreement," she said, weeping, in conclusion, "till my parent reminded me of it, to-night. And to-morrow the Count Regnauld is to arrive. Oh! that we had never met."

Her lover, by this time, was not less agitated than herself. But he strove to comfort her, suggesting, among other things, an appeal to her father for delay.

"It would be useless," answered his companion, despondingly. "I know my father. He would see me die at the altar before he would break his promise once given."

"Not if I was to go to him, and beseech delay, telling him that, when I had won renown, and

could bring wealth to endow you with, I would return and claim you. My lineage is good; at least as good as Count Regnauld's, and better than that of nine-tenths of our modern nobility. Come, dearest, let me try. I have said nothing heretofore of my birth, nor even of my family name, for I know you loved me for myself alone. But, as a man, who has seen the world, I should have known that this dream of happiness must come to an end; that there were others to satisfy beside yourself; and that——"

"No, no, no," interrupted his companion, "you must not, shall not go. You know not what my father is when enraged. It will only end in his challenging you——"

"I will not draw my sword on your parent. How could you think I would."

"Then this Count Regnauld will seek you out, and will insult you, so that him you will have to meet. They will kill you, I know. Oh! if you ever loved me, swear you will abandon this scheme."

"I cannot," answered her lover, after a moment's hesitation, his countenance greatly agitated. "Ask anything else, and I will grant it. But this I cannot."

The Lady Beatrice dried her tears. She was as haughty as she was loving. It was the first boon she had ever asked, and its refusal called the blood to her cheek.

"Then I bid you farewell," she said, disengaging herself, and rising.

"But my honor?" The speaker rose, agitated, and looked beseechingly at her.

"If a man cannot surrender his honor, in a case like this, when a lady asks it, he is unworthy of her." She spoke coldly, almost disdainfully, and moved away.

"But hear me, only a word," urged her lover, following her. "If I do not appear, you are lost to me forever."

But the Lady Beatrice did not even look back. She was, in truth, afraid to trust herself. Her anger was ready to give way at his appealing words. But she reflected that, perhaps, it was better to part thus: he would the sooner forget her, if he thought her unjust; and so she resolutely walked on, nor deigned even a glance, oh! how bitterly to repent it, when, at night, she found herself alone in her chamber, and thought how cruel she must have seemed to him.

"Holy mother," she said, at last, toward morning, with many a wild sob, "be with him and bless him through life. Make him happy with some one he can love."

She did not pray for herself, she could not. It seemed to her as if that would be profanation,

for she, at least, could never be happy. And with this desolate feeling at her heart she sank, about daybreak, into a stupified sleep.

Meantime the castle was all in an uproar. A courier had arrived announcing the approach of the expected guest, who was already close at hand, and would arrive in less than an hour. The marquis rose, at once, to welcome the count. He ordered a sumptuous breakfast to be prepared, and his daughter to be roused, while he himself set forward, with several attendants, to meet her suitor.

The Lady Beatrice accordingly had scarcely fallen asleep, when she was woke by her hand-maidens to hear her father's commands. Never did criminal, on the morning of his execution, feel so utterly hopeless as she did now. The very sky, that to others was brilliant almost beyond example, appeared to her as if covered with a pall. Could she have closed her eyes, never to open them again, it would have been a blessing above price. But no! there was no escape for her, even the grave would not be her friend. So she yielded passively to her tire-women, and was decked in her choicest apparel, unconscious all the while of what they were arraying her in, conscious indeed of only one thing, that her heart was breaking.

Suddenly she remembered her lover's threat to force his way into her father's presence. It was a gleam of hope, at least, or so it seemed to her now, mad as the project had appeared the day before. Oh! if he would only come, that she might see him once more, even if nothing else should result from his visit. But this he would not do. She had angered him beyond hope of pardon. He was now miles away, resolved to forget her, and upbraiding her reproachfully for her cruelty. These thoughts passed through her mind, in a sort of wild, chaotic confusion, driving her almost to the brink of insanity.

Meantime her foster-sister went about the room, with difficulty restraining her tears, for she saw how her mistress was suffering. All at once, the trumpets sounded, and the maids ran to the window, each anxious to catch a first glimpse of the bridegroom. The foster-sister, with the curiosity of the rest, had started too, but happening to catch a look of her mistress' face, her heart smote her, and returning to the chair of the Lady Beatrice, she knelt down, and began fondling and kissing the listless hand that hung there.

Soon the maids returned, outdoing each other with praises of the bridegroom's personal appearance, and of the splendor of his retinue. But their mistress heard nothing of all this. She

sat, gazing on vacancy, like one whom some great calamity had transformed to stone, so that even the most unobservant began to whisper, to wonder if she had a lover in secret, and to change their gaiety for sad and compassionate looks.

"Dear mistress," said her foster-sister, at last, "rouse yourself. Your father will soon be here to conduct you down. Bring some stimulant," she said, sharply turning to the wondering maids, "don't you see your mistress is ill. This event has been too much for her. She has slept little, and is now prostrated, that is all. Bring wine quick, strong wine, and then leave the room. But hold your gossiping tongues."

Left alone with the Lady Beatrice, the faithful foster-sister finally succeeded in arousing the poor girl, by representing to her that the interview was inevitable, and that any effort to avoid it, by leading to inquiry, and discovering the transactions of the last few weeks, would ruin them both, but especially the speaker.

"It is on me your father's anger will chiefly fall," she said, for she knew this would rouse her mistress if anything would. "You he can, at worst, only send to a convent. But he has power of life and death over me as lord of his own seigniority."

So, at last, supported by her foster-sister, but looking like a livid corpse decked in bridal apparel, the Lady Beatrice suffered herself to be lead down stairs, and into the great hall, where the Count Regnauld awaited her. At the threshold she stopped, and would have fallen, had not her attendant sustained her by main strength, till her father received her on his still stalwart arm. Little accustomed to young ladies, the marquis attributed her agitation to maidenly timidity, and, therefore, gave himself no concern at her paleness, though wishing secretly she had allowed her maidens to rouge her cheek a little.

"My lord count," he said, as his guest advanced, with courtly haste, to meet them, "I must apologize for my daughter, who seems coy to-day. But as you are just from Paris, perhaps you have some recipe, brought from the court, to cure such young ladies."

The Lady Beatrice felt that she ought to look up, in order to greet their guest, but she could not. The count evidently was waiting for this act of civility, as he suffered some time to elapse before he answered his host. At last, he said,

"Will not the Lady Beatrice deign even a look to the humblest of her suitors?"

That voice, could it be? Did not her ears deceive her. She glanced up breathlessly at the speaker. No, she was not deceived, for there, in the person of the count, was her anonymous lover.

It was too much for her, after the excitement she had gone through before, and, giving a shriek as if she had been struck by a death-shot, she fell senseless on the floor.

But joy rarely kills, and long before night, the Lady Beatrice had revived sufficiently to see and to forgive her lover, whose explanation was soon made.

"Dearest," he said, "I throw myself on your mercy for this deception. But I could not endure the thought of marrying without love, and so I formed the plan of coming down here and secretly making your acquaintance——"

She pressed his hands at these words, and gave him such a look, that he had to bend down and kiss her before he could proceed.

"You know how we first met. Fortune favored me, I admit, though I had been, for two whole days, watching to make your acquaintance." And then he proceeded to tell how profound was the impression she had made on him, and how his

love had grown, day-by day. Finally he concluded as follows:—

"When I found, yesterday, how you took the denouement I had prepared for our little drama, I believe I should have confessed all, had you not prevented it. Never before had I reflected how much pain my deceit might cause you, for a while, at the end. But I have your forgiveness now, have I not? You know I couldn't swear not to be here to-day. It is the only thing, rely on it, I shall ever refuse you."

The Lady Beatrice could not answer, for the glad tears choked her utterance. But she pressed his hand, and looked up into his eyes, oh! how happy.

A few days after they were married, the whole county pronouncing them the handsomest couple, that had gone to the altar, within human memory.

They never forgot their old rendezvous by the waterfall, but often, with book and guitar, renewed there the drama of "MUSIC AND LOVE."

LAVENDER AND PINKS.

BY FANNY SMITH.

Do you know, dear reader, what a bouquet of lavender and pinks is like? Can you conceive that the far-famed airs from "Araby the blest" are dull in their spicy fragrance compared with them?

One pleasant June morning, as I was tearfully watching the long willow branches sway back and forth in the light breeze, thinking how in their graceful motions they were like the loving arms which once had entwined my neck, and were now palsied and cold in death, and saying to my heart "there is no sorrow like to my sorrow"—my hostess entered with a bunch of lavender and pinks. Their perfume filled my room, and as I turned from the window by which I was leaning, to receive them, Mrs. A—— said quietly,

"Will you have these flowers? they are my favorites, and I never like to put any others with them," and I knew by a slight quivering of the mouth, and the hasty manner in which she turned away, instead of the usual few minutes chat, that there were sad memories connected with my bouquet.

The summer months passed pleasantly by in the little, low, old-fashioned cottage, with its two huge willow trees in front, and giant walnuts at the back, whose branches swayed amicably together over the roof; and always on my toilet table stood a bouquet of fragrant roses and stately lilies, or of larkspurs, lady's-slippers and coreopsis; but always in a separate bunch, as long as they were in season, were a few spears of lavender and pinks.

There was a quiet melancholy in my hostess' face which had from the first interested me. I knew by the silvery hairs which so thickly threaded her raven bands, and by the quiet kindness in her dark eyes, and by the low, unexcited tones of her voice, that the trials of life had swayed fearfully around her, and that now she was exhausted and asked only for rest.

In the course of time I learned her history.

As a girl, self-willed and high-spirited, she had married against the wishes of her friends, and after a few months of wild happiness, she awoke from her fever dream to find that he, for whom she had left friends and the luxuries of a wealthy home, was unworthy of the sacrifice. Year after year passed, and she found her idol shattered and

but clay at her feet, but with a woman's undying faith she hoped on, through poverty, and desertion, and contumely, and she curbed her high spirit to gentle words, and went meekly about to make her home attractive, but, alas! in vain—and after years of sorrow and hope, she rested his dying head upon her bosom, and listened with an appalled heart to the blasphemous ravings of his delirium. And she laid him in his grave, and stilled the moaning of her heart, that she might care for the little ones yet left to comfort her.

But a few months passed, and a new anxiety awaited her. The little babe that was just beginning to lisp "ma—ma" so lovingly, that was so winsome in its ways, so cooing and happy through all her troubles—the "man child" to whose future she was already looking, when he should be her comfort and support, sickened and died.

She laid him in his little coffin, composed his golden curls and waxen fingers, and knelt down and tried to *thank* God that he had been saved from the trials and *temptations* to come. Wild sobs at times escaped her, as she thought of putting him from her warm bosom, and tender encircling arms into the cold, unpitiful grave; but the appeal of the dear Jesus, "*Suffer* little children to come unto me and forbid them not," should it be in vain? and with a fervent "Thy will be done," she laid her baby away from her.

Time wore away to Mrs. A—— in the quiet discharge of her duties to her two remaining children. Hopes for the coming plans were again beginning to dawn faintly through the dark sorrows of the past, when a terrible accident befel her youngest child. Still the mother's heart and hand were not palsied. Day by day she lifted the little sufferer to the window, to feel the cool breeze, or to gaze on the trees, the flowers, the sunset; night by night with trembling fingers she wiped the cold dews, caused by the racking pain, from its forehead; and stilled the wild cry that was going up from her own heart, to sing it to rest with sweet lullabys.

At times indeed her strength would almost fail her. She would rush from the room, to escape the wail from the white parched lips, and the longing, imploring glance of her child's eye, to moan out, "oh, God, oh, God," the only prayer

she could utter for strength, and go back with smiles and cheerful tones to the bed-side.

At length the hour for the mortal struggle came, and in her own arms the mother held the child, repulsing with a sharp, jealous tone, all who offered to touch what had now become so fearfully precious to her, and as she struggled with the convulsed form, she turned away her head, that those looks of agony might not haunt her forever. Amid wind and rain she laid her second child away from her; and when for nights after the storm moaned sickeningly among the willow branches and around the house top, she longed to go out and throw herself upon the little grave, to protect the untroubled sleeper from its fury.

At last the poverty which had so long stared her in the face disappeared. By the death of relatives, a sum which would make her comfortable for life, was secured to her, and her whole attention now was turned to the education of her remaining child. This daughter was growing up into a gentle, delicate girl, who seemed to have imbibed her mother's sorrows in infancy, so that she appeared never to have known the careless pleasures of childhood, and the undimmed hopes of girlhood.

Day by day the mother watched this last treasure, as fair and fragile as a pale lily blossom, fearing that every rude wind would crush it to the earth—sickening at the agonizing thought that perhaps this, her last comfort on earth, would be snatched from her too. The young girl had unconsciously become her friend, counsellor, teacher.

To the watchful eye of love, which cannot be deceived, for its instincts are so sure, the change from week to week became more perceptible. The step was more feeble; the voice lower than of old; whilst the large eyes seemed filled with a mournful radiance; and the blue veins in the thin, white hands grew larger every day.

Then the time came when the walks in the garden, which she had cultivated with so much care, had to be discontinued, and she only knew of its wealth and beauty by the fresh bouquets which were plucked daily: though the only perfume for which she cared was that of her lavender and pinks. A few sprigs of those were always on her bosom, their spiciness revived her so; and she would sit listlessly arranging the grey blue of the lavender with the white and crimson of the carnations, in the pleasant June sunshine, while visions of the far away land to which she was hastening, became more distinct the nearer she approached it.

One July morning found her too feeble to rise from her bed as usual; and when the morrow's sun arose she was shrouded for the grave with a bouquet of her favorite flowers on her bosom; seventeen years from the day on which she had been laid, a little wailing stranger, on the warm, palpitating bosom of her mother, she was laid again on the cold bosom of her mother earth, who stretched out *her* cold arms to receive her.

Then many talked of the wonderful resignation of the mother. They knew not that it was the apathy of despair, leading almost to unbelief, that her faith had nearly died out by reason of her many trials; and that as Job of old was advised, she was almost tempted to "curse God and die." But better feelings at last triumphed. From out among the glowing stars she saw the loving eyes of those she lost look down upon her, and she heard their voices in the night wind that murmured around the cottage, and all pleasant things which God had created drew her with loving arms to them and Him; and now wherever there are tossings on sick pillows, or weeping eyes, or breaking hearts, or immortal souls panting at the gates of the Eternal City, Mrs. A—— is there to counsel and console.

I now say no more to my heart, "there is no sorrow like to my sorrow."

A MID-SUMMER DAY-DREAM.

BY ELLA RODMAN.

THE shades of evening were falling around, and the last train of cars for Elm-Brook were perpetrating the dreadful explosion known as "letting off steam." The horses that had been standing quietly in the shade, undisturbed by any enemies except the flies, began to prick up their ears and pant for action; children looked resolutely into the twilight, and identified various trees and posts as "grandma," and "Aunt Sarah;" and the older portion of the community made frantic rushes at the liberated crowd, somewhat in the style of the play where all make for chairs—no matter whose they get if they are not left without one.

Rather bewildered by the noise and darkness, was a young lady, who carried a small hand-basket, and seemed undecided whether she had arrived at her destination or not. Her figure was slight and graceful; and she wore a travelling dress of brown linen, with a deep cape of the same, and a straw bonnet trimmed with white ribbon. Her gloves and gaiters were unexceptionable; and a deep collar and cuffs of the most spotless linen completes her attire. Her face, what could be seen of it, shaded, as it was, by her veil, was certainly attractive, for strangers were constantly approaching her with offers of assistance; but she declined them all, and stood like a shipwrecked mariner upon the boarded strip in front of the ladies' saloon.

It is not very exhilarating to find oneself in a strange place with no one ready to receive you; and Lilla Mornton, having undertaken a three hours' journey alone for the first time in her life, watched the receding locomotive with something in her eye, which, had there been any sunshine around, would have sparkled very much like a tear. But, before she had quite made up her mind to be miserable, a mild-looking gentleman, in a white cravat, seized both hands with a rapturous welcome, and coolly possessed himself of the hand-basket on her arm.

"I was so afraid," said he, "that you were going to disappoint us again—but here you are at last. Now for the baggage-ticket."

The trunk was soon procured; and the traveller's spirits revived when she found herself seated beside Mrs. Willgrove in the minister's substantial carriage, en route for the parsonage.

A flock of small boys, who seemed disposed within the vehicle almost as impassably as the cherubs in pictures, stared at the stranger until their faces were prolonged notes of curiosity and admiration; while a three-year-old urchin, who, by some mental hallucination, was considered a baby and treated accordingly, reposed in his mother's arms, and was remarkably infantile for his years in everything but size.

The evening was beautiful; the sweet odor of fresh hay and clover blossoms came borne upon the air; and as the carriage rolled quietly along upon the turf-striped road, Lilla came to the conclusion that the life of a country clergyman approached nearer the *dolce far niente* of perfect happiness, than any state of existence at which she had yet obtained a glimpse. The situation of Elm-Brook was picturesque in the extreme; a pretty, Connecticut village just on the sound, while the beautiful trees from which it derived its name surrounded it like a guard of gigantic sentinels. Mr. Willgrove smiled at the raptures of his visitor, as they drove along, and Mrs. Willgrove looked exactly as she had looked before. Her's was not a face remarkable for expression.

The parsonage was now in sight—an old-fashioned country dwelling, that seemed buried in rose-vines; and the traveller alighted with a firm conviction that her somewhat adventurous visit would be productive of an endless amount of pleasure.

A romantic, thoughtless, half visionary sort of a character was Lilla Mornton. Without being remarkably pretty, she invariably attracted; and her tasteful style of dress was in itself a charm. Added to this, a complete ignorance of the ways of the world, which her admirers termed "beautiful freshness," and her aunt "lamentable greenness," always interested people as to what she would do or say next. She had been taken by a wealthy aunt and uncle from a large family of children at an early age; and Lilla's satisfactory establishment in the world was the theme now uppermost in the minds of her relatives. Her uncle, to be sure, would have missed her sadly; but it had been so often impressed upon him by his lady that the getting rid of Lilla was actually a matter of duty, that he supposed it must be. The prettiest of dresses were always

at her disposal, for the arraying of a young girl was a source of absolute pleasure to the childless Mrs. Mornton, and Lilla was quite as indispensable, on that account, as a doll to children of a smaller growth; so the petted niece enjoyed her well-filled wardrobe exceedingly, without troubling herself in the least to wonder whether such things would *always* be forthcoming.

The whole party had gone to Saratoga; and there they found some old friends of Lilla's, the Willgroves, who had actually come for the express purpose of benefiting Mrs. Willgrove's health, without a thought of being fashionable! Lilla was perfectly unmanageable; she would talk to Mrs. Willgrove by the hour, without taking the least trouble to entertain Mr. Moody, who sat on the other side of her with his hands in his pockets, wrapt up in the possession of a hundred thousand dollars, but whose bump of conversation was not very strongly developed.

The Willgroves insisted upon a visit—Lilla put forth all her powers of pleading—it was rather early in the season for people who were anybody to be at the watering-places—so, Mrs. Mornton gave a conditional promise of acceptance; that is, they were to return home, first, and if no more eligible excursion offered, Lilla was to be sent to Elm-Brook. So matters stood, until the day in question; haunted by a dim perspective of Mr. Moody, who, until the last moment, was confidently expected to "turn up," and thus put a stop to her proposed fitting, our heroine impatiently counted the slow hours until she found herself seated in the cars, and watched her uncle's receding figure as he disappeared in the distance.

She was now at the parsonage; and she contemplated the small windows, with their narrow panes, the wooden mantles, and the mirrorless apartment with feelings of pleasure. The old-fashioned silver, the gay-colored china, and diminutive spoons, were themes of never-ceasing admiration; and Lilla found herself, where she had so often wished to be, in an old-fashioned country house.

All was so sweetly peaceful; except, indeed, when the large infant before-mentioned manifested an insane desire to scald himself and brothers with hot tea, and, in consequence of their resistance, laid violent hands upon them. The boys received his slaps as though they were used to them, and they probably were.

"Trotty!" said Mr. Willgrove, a corruption of Trotford, after a rich uncle, "Trotty!" and he looked stern as a warning angel, "stop, now! or take the consequences!"

But Trotty *didn't* stop, and he didn't take the

consequences, either—for there were none to take. Lilla tried not to laugh, but she felt very much like it, when Mr. Willgrove, after frowning immensely, resumed his seat.

Trotty displayed his independence by kicking the straw mat placed before him to receive the breakfasts, dinners, and teas, which he made a regular practice of upsetting; and his mother contented herself with saying occasionally—"don't, Trotty"—a monotonous sound which he probably attributed to the crickets, for he never deigned to notice it.

No one could conquer the redoubtable Trotty; until, at length, tired of tormenting every one, he fell asleep, and was borne from the bosom of his family without a struggle. A feeling like that experienced by Sinbad, when he found himself freed from the old man who had clung to him so tenaciously, appeared to diffuse itself through the family on the disappearance of Trotty; and Mr. Willgrove preached such a beautiful sermon on the moonlight, as they sat in the open window, that Lilla wondered more and more at his wife's perpetual calmness.

Sunday came; and the visitor found herself, for the first time, within the limits of a real country church. Through the half closed blinds came glimpses of waving foliage and blue water, and the sweet breath of summer, that played mischievous franks with the hymn-book leaves, and even dared to stir the slightly silvered locks that rested on the clergyman's brow.

Lilla had attired herself in accordance with the simplicity of the scene, and her muslin dress and black scarf looked fresh and pretty; while the only ornament inside of her straw bonnet were soft braids of brown hair that rested on a cheek of delicate fairness. Lilla's eyes, though not in themselves uncommon, had a marvelous power of being raised up and cast down effectively; and as they now travelled around the various pews, the occupants found their attention irresistibly attracted toward the stranger. They were a plain-looking set, the people of Elm-Brook; and Lilla selected more than one old woman, who, she was sure, ornamented the edge of her pies with a thimble.

Mr. Willgrove began his sermon simply and beautifully, and every eye in the community was turned reverently toward him. The visitor listened, spell-bound, to the deep voice that seemed to penetrate every quarter; but when the plate was handed around, her eyes resumed their roving propensities, and finally rested in a distant corner with every appearance of interest.

Dressed in his Sunday best, and brushed to the last degree of nicety, sat a young gentleman,

who, in height, at least, seemed a human prototype of the elm trees around. His rather handsome features were an expression of the utmost gravity; and his eyes were furtively directed toward the minister's pew. It may have been because the greater portion of the men were evidently private property—or because she so constantly detected his eyes in the act of watching her own; but, however this was, Lilla became quite interested in observing this country youth, and fancied in him a strong resemblance to somebody who would, doubtless, have been an admirer, were it not that her annt was so determined he should be. The elegant Lindsey Brereton would, probably, have felt but little complimented by this fancy; but as Lilla glanced at the extensive figure in that corner pew, she thought of "nature's nobleman," and of every thing else that was particularly unsuited to the character before her.

In passing out of church, she had a nearer view of her silent admirer; he looked rather coarse upon a close survey, and his clothes were none of the finest; but an earnest gaze from those dark hazel eyes brought a glowing color to Lilla's usually pale cheek, and she joined Mr. Willgrove in some confusion.

They were driving home; and respectful bows from the scattered congregation saluted the minister as they passed.

"Of what are you thinking, Lilla?" asked Mr. Willgrove, as he noticed his young guest's abstraction.

"Of your sermon," she replied, with some embarrassment, "it was beautiful."

"I feared," said Mr. Willgrove, mischievously, "that your thoughts were otherwise employed—perhaps gone to look for the eyes that wandered about so in church time."

Lilla tried to laugh off the blush occasioned by this remark, and then inquired: "Who is the young gentleman that sat in the corner pew? The very tall one, with brown hair and eyes?"

"You are almost as particular in your description as though you were making out his passport," replied Mr. Willgrove, with a smile, "the term '*young gentleman*' would have been sufficient—for such articles are, I can assure you, scarce enough at Elm-Brook. But to answer your question, Miss Lilla, he rejoices in the name of Oatson Hayfield, owns houses and lands, horses and cows, and, on week days, employs himself in tilling the ground—in other words, he is a regular farmer, and comes of a family who have pursued the same occupation from generation to generation."

"He is very rich," observed Mrs. Willgrove,

"besides his father's farm, an uncle left him a large place completely stocked with everything. People say that the stores of linen and bedding there are inexhaustible; and there are ruffled pillow-cases by the dozens."

Lilla, who was almost as much astonished at this lengthy speech from Mrs. Willgrove as was the Persian King in the Arabian Nights, when his dumb bride spoke, was now compelled to listen to a complete inventory of Mr. Hayfield's property, both personal and real estate. Mrs. Willgrove concluded by remarking that "all the girls were setting their caps for him;" and Lilla was rather disappointed to find that one whom *her* notice was to have rescued from obscurity, enjoyed all the country eclat of wealth and bachelorhood.

This rural life was really beautiful. Even the monotonous hum of the crickets and katydids was perfect music at night; and in the morning, when Lilla stood in her window, with the fresh, country breeze playing with her hair, and the song of the birds in the tall elm trees around, she was quite convinced that this was the only phase of existence to be desired upon earth.

Sometimes a sort of floating wish presented itself that Mr. Willgrove had a brother who looked exactly like himself, and preached just as he did—and that this brother should ask her to preside over just such a parsonage as that; but then Lilla's rambles in cloud-life were brought back to earth by a sight of Mrs. Willgrove seated by an enormous basket of unmended stockings, or a perfect wilderness of unmade shirts. Her ethereal nature shuddered at the idea of contact with so coarse a reality; and she felt, at such times, willing to brave the danger of "not being understood," or "appreciated" by some Mr. Moody, or Lindsey Brereton, rather than be, even to a second Mr. Willgrove what Mrs. Willgrove was.

Ministers were proverbially poor; but a farmer? *that* was the thing? She could spend her time careering around on horseback—or turning over the fresh hay for amusement—or doing any thing else that was perfectly picturesque, and not calculated to soil her hands. And, then, what pretty straw bonnets she would wear! And what snowy dresses! Her coral and turquoise ornaments were as so much dross and rubbish compared to wild flowers; and beautiful simplicity more desirable than all Madame Hanton's French style.

"Have you fallen asleep, Lilla?" called Mr. Willgrove, for the carriage was waiting for a drive, and the young lady had been all this unconscionable time tying her bonnet.

In two or three bounds, she had sprung down the flight of stairs; and the whole party, Trotty included, proceeded as rapidly as two very slow horses could carry them. The scenery was beautiful—Lilla in raptures—Mr. Willgrove amused—and Mrs. Willgrove closely cornered by Trotty, whom not even a bribe of candy could coax off of his mother's lap.

But the wants of our earthly natures are constantly obtruding themselves when their presence is least desired; and at Mrs. Willgrove's suggestion, the horses' heads were turned away from "leafy glades" and "purling streams" to rest ignominiously in front of a baker's shop. Mr. Willgrove alighted, and left the reins in charge of one of the boys; but the young gentleman, absorbed in contemplating some distant object of interest, loosened his hold until they became entangled around the horses' feet, and a sudden plunge forward aroused the inmates of the carriage to a sense of their danger.

Lilla grew pale with fright, and sank helplessly back upon the cushions; but the next moment a strong hand had seized the bridle—a herculean figure stood up before them—and the young farmer bashfully received Mr. Willgrove's expressions of gratitude. A single glance toward the farthest corner of the carriage spoke volumes; and Lilla returned from that drive decidedly in love with Oatson Hayfield.

Poor, unsuspecting Mrs. Mornton! How fortunate that she was spared the knowledge of this fearful backsliding on the part of her carefully trained niece. Mr. Willgrove watched his young guest with considerable interest; but he knew her better than she knew herself, and decided that her aunt had nothing to fear.

"What say you to a boating excursion, Lilla?" was a question which raised that excitable young lady to a pitch of enthusiasm absolutely startling.

"Not very far from here," continued Mr. Willgrove, "there is, in the sound, an island of about twelve acres, containing a solitary residence—this island is the farm left to Mr. Hatfield by his uncle. So, that you see he is quite a Robinson Crusoe, if he only lived there—but he leaves the place every evening. We shall find him there in the day time, for he is obliged to attend to the farm; and I have no doubt that he will be proud to show his visitors every hospitality."

There was not a dissenting voice in the community; Mr. Willgrove departed to secure a boat; and Lilla, half bewildered by this fresh piece of romance, arrayed herself in a rose colored muslin and gipsy flat, that called forth a perfect shower of compliments when she descended.

In the best possible humor with herself and

every one else, our heroine entered the boat, and was soon lulled by the soft, gliding motion into a dream of romantic improbability. The scene was charming beyond description; and the various little islands that dot the sound looked like fairy bowers. The rich, warm sunlight sparkled on the waves in golden streams; the sky was as clear and blue as though all storms had passed away from the earth forever; and the only drawback to perfect happiness was the heat, which is never felt in such intensity as at three o'clock on a July afternoon, in a row-boat upon the water.

But when they reached their destination, such a scene of beauty burst upon their view that all suffering was well repaid. The blue waves dashed up against the little island, that looked like an emerald set upon the bosom of the water, and foamed in miniature breakers, that washed the feet of tall trees and clustering shrubs. The house, which was a large, square edifice, with a piazza running entirely around it at the first and second stories, was placed almost exactly in the middle of the island, and approached by various paths shaded by elm trees. Never in Lilla's wildest dreams had she imagined anything to equal this.

Mr. Hayfield was not visible, and the party proceeded up stairs to the second piazza. The place was in rather a neglected state, the house bare of furniture, and wild grape-vines were entangled together over the pillars; while through this natural lattice-work came glimpses of blue water and rich sunlight.

Lilla gazed dreamily over the sound, and thought Oatson Hayfield a very happy man. But where was he? It looked rather like an invasion to be wandering about a private dwelling without a master of ceremonies; and Mr. Willgrove departed to seek him in an adjacent cornfield. Sometime elapsed without the appearance of either of the gentlemen; and the party up stairs concluded to descend.

Guided by the sound of voices, they approached a peach orchard not far from the house; and there stood Mr. Willgrove apparently engaged in conversation with one of the field hands. But the words: "Come just as you are—the ladies will excuse it," and something about "working clothes," and "not fit," caused Lilla to turn and stare most intently into the embarrassed face of Oatson Hayfield.

The more Lilla gazed, the more astonished did she become, and the more impossible she found it to identify the individual before her as the smart young farmer who had attracted her attention. A pair of feet, quite innocent of shoes or stockings, whose hue spoke eloquently of potatoe

digging, and whose size were doubtless a tax upon leather, forced themselves upon her sight with all the pertinacity of unwelcome objects—a shirt of crimson flannel was taking bird's-eye views of the world through apertures obligingly left for it in an outer one of coarse muslin—a straw hat that looked as though Mr. Hayfield might have been lunching upon it when interrupted by the clergyman—and a generous display of hands that appeared fully competent to knock down a moderate sized horse, completed the picture.

Lilla trembled, and closed her eyes, as though to shut out some disagreeable view; while Mr. Willgrove introduced his companion with a sort of struggle between mirth and propriety quite at variance with his usual demeanor.

Mr. Hayfield pattered up stairs on hospitable thoughts intent, and Lilla took a critical survey of his entire figure; but by the time that she arrived at the sole of his foot, she felt that her dream was over. Whether she expected to discover the young farmer in a full suit of black, with patent leather boots, shining hair, and not even the stiffening taken out of his collar by a moderate use of the hoe, she never distinctly stated; but an appealing glance toward Mr. Willgrove, as though she were desirous of removing from a disagreeable neighborhood, quite upset the small stock of gravity which that gentleman found himself in possession of.

"It was really too bad," he whispered, "to come upon him so unexpectedly—but don't laugh, Lilla."

Here Mr. Willgrove leaned as far over the railing as possible, that no sound of mirth might torture the feelings of their entertainer; but Lilla was in no laughing mood. The fairy isle was fast losing its beauty. That dreadful figure kept haunting her, even when Mr. Hayfield had removed to a distant part of the grounds; and she felt as though under the disagreeable influence of some hideous dream.

"And so, Lilla, you would not like to be a farmer's wife?" whispered a voice at her elbow, "it is well that you have become so easily disgusted, for your aunt and uncle would never have listened to such a thing."

Our mortified heroine encountered the mirth-beaming eyes of Mr. Willgrove, and turned resolutely from all the romantic attractions of an island home. A mist had come over the blue water—a cloud upon the smiling sky—a change o'er the spirit of her dream. Lilla felt that henceforth she was to be a sacrifice to refined tastes and expensive habits; and resolved to meet her fate with praiseworthy philosophy.

The next morning a light, Rockaway wagon drove up to the quiet parsonage—a pair of splendid horses were reined suddenly in—and in another moment a stylish-looking young gentleman stood in the small parlor, with a letter from Mrs. Mornton. Lilla introduced him as "Mr. Brereton," and announced the necessity of her instant departure—her aunt would be put off no longer.

Her things were soon ready, and the returning Rockaway bore an additional burden. Mr. Brereton spoke of Europe and the scenes through which he had lately passed, and Lilla's expressive face kindled up with a glow of enthusiasm; he spoke of moonlight and Italian ruins, and his companion looked pensive; he spoke of moonlight and *love*, and wondered that any one should call Lilla pale.

The truant was folded to her aunt's bosom with an embrace that redoubled in vigor after a few whispered words; and Lilla laughed to think that she had ever fancied a resemblance between the country youth and Lindsey Brereton.

Some acquaintances who saw Lilla at Madame Hanton's, in the autumn, laughing and blushing over a rich lace veil, which her aunt insisted upon her trying on, glanced at each other in a significant manner, and were fully prepared for what followed—the wedding cards of Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey Brereton.

But Lilla didn't forget her old friends; the Willgroves received repeated invitations to return her visit; and one day, some years from that Elm-Brook chapter, Mr. Willgrove found himself in the elegantly furnished dwelling over which Lilla presided. A smile wreathed his lips involuntarily as he glanced at the luxury around him, and thought how very nearly two people had been made miserable for life. Lilla was as unfit for Oatson Hayfield as he for her.

Her light footstep made no sound upon the velvet carpet, and Mr. Willgrove started as the object of his thoughts stood before him. In the youthful face of Mrs. Brereton there were no traces of the few years that had flown since their last meeting; and she was prettier and more elegant-looking than ever. The crimson curtains, near which she stood, cast a soft glow on her cheek; and to imagine *her* the mistress of that farm house, seemed as preposterous as it would have been to place the marble statuette beside her in one of the unfurnished rooms.

"I am glad to see you!" said Lilla, after the first greeting, "I have never ceased to think of you, and those beautiful sermons that I used to hear at Elm-Brook—and, now, I am going to tell you some good news."

"What is it?" asked Mr. Willgrove, seating himself rather reluctantly upon the embroidered flowers that covered the sofa, "I am fond of hearing good news."

Lilla hesitated with the embarrassment natural to generous people, when about to divulge their own performances; but, finally, she mustered courage to say:

"The thought of your wasting such eloquence and talents upon these country clodpoles has often troubled me, and I could not rest until I had accomplished my plan. Our clergyman has left—and the minds of the congregation were for sometime distracted between rival candidates. I told them of *you*—I did not praise, I only did you justice; several of the members heard you preach, and a deputation will soon wait upon you to ask you to exchange the monotony of an Elm-Brook life for a luxurious house—a princely salary—and a wealthy and devoted congregation."

Lilla had spoken rapidly, with downcast eyes, and for some moments there was a pause. When she looked up, Mr. Willgrove stood directly before her, and had taken both of her hands in his. A bright color was burning in his cheek, and those earnest eyes seemed looking into her very soul.

"Lilla," said he, more sadly than reproachfully, "have these paintings and statues, and all these beautiful things taught you *this*? Have they indeed so wound themselves about your heart that you offer them as irresistible bribes to one who has been called as a guide to others?"

An expression of pain and sorrow passed over

Lilla's face; and seating himself beside her, Mr. Willgrove continued,

"I thank you sincerely for the kindness of your intentions, but I should indeed be unworthy of my trust did I listen to the voice of this temptation. I have not the refinements of wealth, it is true—but I have the earth, and the sky, and the beautiful things of nature; and did I possess the eloquence and talents of which you speak, I never could justify myself in making them objects of *barter*. The people of Elm-Brook may be 'clodpoles,' but I would not forfeit their good opinion for all the inducements you can offer. You had not *always* so contemptible an opinion of a country life, Lilla."

She understood this allusion, and smiled through her tears at the recollection of Oatson Hayfield.

"Forgive me," said she, "I feel that I have done very wrong." She was completely subdued into a reverent admiration of the man before her, country clergyman though he was.

"Now, Lilla," said Mr. Willgrove, smilingly, "I did not come here to make you cry, and if my presence has that effect I shall be afraid to ask you to Elm-Brook. We have each the situation for which we are best fitted; and I should be quite as much out of *my* element *here* as a certain young lady, who shall be nameless, would have found herself at that little island in the sound."

Lilla *did* go to Elm-Brook—but she never had a relapse of the MID-SUMMER DAY-DREAM.

THE FORTUNE HUNTER.

BY E. W. DEWEES.

FRANK SELDON was as fine a young fellow as ever breathed. He was gay, open, generous, full of talent, and had the kindest and best heart in the world. Yet with a character careless and uncalculating almost to a fault, he laughingly, but quite seriously, declared his determination of becoming a fortune-hunter, and he explained his views on the subject, to his friends, somewhat thus—

"Here am I," he would say, "a poor devil of an M. D., who, despite great talents and much learning, has not, and, as the world goes, cannot reasonably expect ever to get any practice, without a helping hand from some one. My father has just failed in business, so I can have no help from that quarter—I have no one else to look to but myself. I am a handsome enough young fellow—my affections are entirely disengaged; I must look upon them as my stock in trade, and dispose of them so as to bring in the largest return. It's as easy to fall in love with an heiress as any other woman, and depend upon it I shall prudently contrive to make love and interest meet, some of these days."

Not long after these prudential resolutions were formed, two young ladies from Boston, came on a visit to the house of Mrs. Clemant, a lady of our fortune-hunter's acquaintance. And as though fortune favored his views, one of these ladies, Miss Mary Bancroft, was a great heiress; the other, Miss Mary Dana, was the portionless daughter of an artist.

Doubtless with a view of reducing theory to practice, our hero presented himself at Mrs. Clemant's soon after the arrival of her young guests. When he entered the drawing-room the young ladies were at the piano singing a duet together, and several gentlemen of the neighborhood, drawn, as young Seldon suspected, by the same magnet which had attracted himself, stood near the piano listening. Entering the room quietly so as not to disturb the musicians, our hero seated himself by Mrs. Clemant on the sofa, and employed himself till the song ended, in studying the countenances of the two young ladies. One was a tall blond, with regular features, and stately bearing; the other a brunette of middle size, her figure full, but very graceful, her face so varying with changing expressions

that the beholder was never at leisure to ascertain the style of the features.

Young Seldon's eyes, after scrutinizing both ladies, rested with most pleasure on the mobile face of the beautiful brunette—he hoped *she* might be the heiress. But no; when the song was ended, and he was introduced to the young ladies, the taller responded to the name of Miss Bancroft, the other to that of Miss Dana.

Young Seldon sighed, but resolved to be discreet, and accordingly addressed his conversation to the legitimate object. Still, with all his prudence, he could not prevent his eyes wandering occasionally to the bright face of Miss Dana, who remained sitting at the piano, carelessly touching the keys, and looking up with varying expressions on her brilliant face, while conversing with a young gentleman who was standing beside her.

The other gentlemen, like young Seldon, attached themselves to the heiress.

More music was requested, and our hero being no indifferent musician, soon found himself taking part in a trio. He felt that he never sang better, he saw that his companions were pleased with him, and his spirits rose high. He thought both ladies were charming; both had charming voices. He sang several duets with each. Miss Bancroft's voice was a high and pure soprano; Miss Dana's a rich contralto. Connoisseurs might prefer Miss Bancroft's, that he thought very likely; but he felt that Miss Dana's voice accorded best with his own, which was a bass.

Both ladies were very gracious to our hero, and when he left them it was with the sense of having passed a most delightful evening, and with the impression that fortune-hunting was the most agreeable employment in the world.

The following evening Frank Seldon was again a visitor at Mrs. Clemant's. He came, by agreement, to practice with the young ladies. Many times during the evening he found it necessary to remind himself that it was Miss *Bancroft*, with whom he was to fall in love; yet in spite of all his endeavors to the contrary, he found his eyes ever searching for Miss Dana's piquant face, and resting delighted on her graceful form. In vain he commanded himself to admire the classic formation of Miss Bancroft's features, and the dignity of her carriage; one bright, roguish glance

from his Miss Dana's dark eye—one pout of her budding lips, one sweet blush flying over her dark, yet brilliant face, made his heart bound with a rapture he could not repress, and which all Miss Bancroft's perfections could not call forth.

Again he sang with both young ladies; again he felt the vast difference between singing with one, whose voice, though faultlessly true, did not perfectly accord with his own, and the delight of blending his voice with another whose every tone seemed to melt into, and perfectly unite with his, forming a perfect harmony.

Many such evenings as those I have described flew delightfully by. At the close of one of them, Mrs. Clemant seated herself at the piano to play a waltz for her young guests. Quite a number of young people were assembled in her pleasant drawing-room, besides our hero, and at the first sound of her spirited touch on the piano, gay couples were whirling, as though by magic, round the room. Frank Seldon had been too late in bethinking himself of his resolutions to secure the hand of the heiress, but he repaired this misfortune, as much as possible, by soliciting the hand of Miss Dana. Never did sylph move with lighter, more ærial grace, than did the little fairy Frank held in his arms; she seemed to float on the music—to rise and fall with its cadences; not as by voluntary action, but as though her movements were swayed by the music, and were its effect. Frank felt that he had never known what waltzing was before. He stood beside his partner when she chose to sit down, fanning her, and gazing delighted into her bright, glowing face, brilliant with the color dancing had called into her cheeks, and gay with the laughing jests she addressed to him. I know not what our fortune-hunter was thinking about, but he started as though he had been doing something wrong, when a little movement behind him apprized him that Miss Bancroft wished to seat herself by her friend.

As though suddenly remembering something he had forgotten, he begged the favor of her hand for the next waltz. Soon they were moving together round the room; but how different a thing was this waltz from the last. True, Miss Bancroft's steps were perfectly correct, and her carriage not ungraceful—but spirit, and feeling were wanting. Instantly our hero's brain began to spin a theory as to the mode of determining a woman's character by her manner of waltzing.

As soon as Frank's attention was no longer required by his partner, his eyes went eagerly in search of Miss Dana. She was waltzing with Mr. —, the gentleman with whom he had

observed her talking, the first evening he had ever seen her. A pang of jealousy shot through his heart. He could not endure to think the delight which so lately had thrilled to his inmost being, should be common to others as well as himself. Even when the waltz was ended, his tortures were not over, for Mr. — still lingered near his partner, and our poor fortune-hunter envied him every smile he gained from the portionless friend of the heiress.

Still, notwithstanding the strange fascination which Miss Dana exercised over him, our hero was far from succumbing without a struggle to his impulses. He had made up his mind to be a fortune-hunter, and a fortune-hunter, he was still determined to be. After his old fashion of soliloquizing he often talked to himself thus:

"The idea of my marrying for love, is simply preposterous. I couldn't afford it; and besides, I'm not in love. Miss Mary Dana is very enchanting, I own," here he always paused, and sighed before proceeding, "but Miss Mary Bancroft is more classically beautiful, and any man might be proud to call such a woman his wife. Yes, to-night I will go to Mrs. Clemant's with my wits about me, and not let every trifling temptation divert me from my object."

Thus bravely our hero talked; but, alas! for human weakness—the first tone of Miss Dana's rich voice, the first sound of her merry laugh, the first glance of her roguish eye, made his heart bound, and fettered his every thought upon herself. The little witch seemed aware of the power she wielded, and disposed to use it tyrannically. She piqued young Seldon, she flirted with him—she repulsed him, she enticed him; she was cold, warm, teasing, alluring, quarrelsome, and tender, twenty times a day. Worst of all was it for our hero, when she made him jealous by flirting with M. —. It did not require the keen eye of a lover, to see that the latter was much interested in her. He was a man of refinement, and superior character—by no means a rival to be despised. Frank felt this, and ere long every thought of fortune-hunting was forgotten in the absorbing struggle to eclipse his rival in Miss Dana's regard. She, little coquette as she was, showed no preference for either.

One bright morning in May, a gay party of equestrians left Mrs. Clemant's door. They were to ride to a lovely spot in the country, where they were to spend the day. Servants were to follow them in wagons, bringing refreshments, and all other necessities; a collation was to be spread on the grass, and after a day of pleasure, they were to return home by moonlight.

The day was propitious, and in high spirits the party arrived at the place of destination. True, our poor fortune-hunter's spirits were a little dashed by having been too late to secure the honor of escorting Miss Dana, and his temper tried by observing the tender gallantry of Mr. —, who rode beside her; these circumstances, however, did not appear to affect the general happiness of the party, and all was smiles and sunshine.

Almost immediately after the collation, which proved a most successful affair, young Seldon observed that Miss Dana had disappeared, and as time slipped on, and she did not return, he began to feel some uneasiness on her account. No one else appeared to notice her absence, and Mr. —'s presence proved that he was not with her; a circumstance which Frank observed with satisfaction. His anxiety still increasing as it grew later, he resolved, at last, to steal away and go in search of her. Happening to pass the large tree where the horses were tied, he perceived with something like a start of horror, that Miss Dana's horse was not there.

"Where is Miss Dana's horse?" he inquired of the groom. The man, in more words than I cared to repeat, explained that Miss Dana had mounted her horse, two hours before, saying she was only going a few miles, to explore a pretty spot which had struck her fancy as she passed it in the morning, and should be back in an hour.

Scarcely knowing what he did, Seldon rushed on in the direction indicated, his brain in a perfect tumult of terror, and the most burning love. Yes, in the first moment of apprehension for Miss Dana's safety, the love which had slumbered half unconsciously in his bosom, burst forth with an intensity which left him no longer in doubt as to his feelings. He had gone but about a mile, when he descried a riderless horse galloping toward him—it was Miss Dana's. Our hero made an unsuccessful effort to catch the reins as the horse passed, and then sped, without delaying for another attempt, still more swiftly onward. About two miles further on, he saw a motionless object lying on the road. His heart sank. As he approached he perceived that his fears were realized. Miss Dana lay there totally insensible. Seldon raised her in his arms, but his agitation was so great that he could not determine if she were alive or dead; and so completely had excess of emotion destroyed his presence of mind, that not one of the many medical remedies, with which he should have been familiar, occurred to him. He could only fold her fondly in his arms, kissing her pale cheeks, and calling on her name in tones of the deepest distress. Suddenly he thought he

perceived a faint shade of pink returning to the white cheek—it deepened at the rapturous kiss of thanksgiving he pressed on her lips—it became a deep blush as he pressed her joyfully to his heart, and when he looked again in her face, the closed eyes half opened, and from under the long lashes, a sidelong glance of mischievous roguery flashed out, and a smile of peculiar meaning lurked about the mouth. That smile seemed to say, plainly as words, "you're nicely cornered, sir!" Seldon caught its meaning, and instantly jumped at the conclusion that the whole scene had been but a preconcerted trick. Hurt and indignant, he sprang from Miss Dana's side, and was about to utter some angry words, when he perceived by his companion's sinking form, and pallid face, that she was again nearly fainting.

"I believe I am somewhat hurt," she said, pointing to her arm, which hung lifeless by her side. Our hero knelt beside her with words of concern and sympathy. He saw at once that the arm was broken, and summoning his own resolution, he asked Miss Dana if she had strength and courage to have it set on the spot, telling her that by this promptness she would be saved much future pain, and promising to exert his utmost skill. Miss Dana assented, and bore the necessary pain Seldon was obliged to inflict, with such unflinching fortitude as increased still more the exalted admiration which he already entertained for her.

Carried away by the excitement of the moment, and the tender compassion called forth, by the occasion, words of love escaped our hero's lips, of which he was unconscious till it was too late to recall them—nor did he wish to do so. In spite of the whispers of prudence, his heart exulted in their utterance, and he listened breathlessly for Miss Dana's reply. It was so low that he had to bend his head to catch her whisper.

"They told me you wanted to marry an heiress."

Seldon bit his lip.

"Why don't you marry Miss Bancroft?" continued his tormentor—"she's a fortune, and—they say you're a fortune-hunter."

An angry flash rose to Seldon's cheek, but mastering himself in a moment, he replied,

"Your taunt comes home to me with some truth; but surely, Mary, I had no reason to expect it from *you*."

How Mary replied, and how the question was settled, I know not; I only know that half an hour afterward, when found by some of their friends, who had come in search of them, having become alarmed by the return of Miss Dana's horse without a rider, they appeared to be on

the best of terms with each other, and notwithstanding Miss Dana's painful accident, her face, as well as that of our hero, was radiant with happiness.

Miss Dana was duly scolded for her imprudence, and pitied for her misfortune; and, as to ride home on horseback was impossible, the gentlemen contributed their overcoats, and the ladies their shawls, to form a couch for her on the bottom of one of the wagons. Thither Seldon carefully lifted her, and insisted on driving the vehicle himself.

One morning, about a week from this time, an elderly gentleman, Mr. Bancroft, arrived at Mrs. Clemant's. He had come on to escort his daughter and her friend home. Seldon was at the house at the time of his arrival, having called, as in duty bound, to visit his patient. He heard Mr. Bancroft's name announced; what was his surprise then, to see Miss Dana spring into his arms, exclaiming, "my dear father!" Mrs. Clemant's surprise was as great as his own. Her expressions of astonishment called forth an explanation, by which a romantic manœuvre of the young ladies was brought to light.

It appeared that Miss Bancroft, (late Miss Dana) haunted by the idea that she was only sought for her fortune, prevailed on her friend, on their arrival in an entirely new place, to change names with her. Mrs. Clemant was easily imposed upon, since, though an old friend of Miss Bancroft's family, she had never seen our heroine since she was an infant, and the *real* Miss Dana was also personally a stranger to her. Thus favored by circumstances, the heiress indulged her whim of seeing how far she owed the homage she had been in the habit of receiving to her own attractions, and Miss Dana, on her part, was pleased with the eclat of passing herself off for an heiress.

Just as our heroine had finished her hurried apologies and explanations to Mrs. Clemant and her father, the former was summoned from the room by the arrival of some visitors—a circumstance at which Miss Bancroft inwardly rejoiced, as she bashfully presented her bewildered lover to her father, whispering, as she put her arms coaxingly around his neck—

"The gentleman, father, whom I wrote to you about."

"I see, I see," cried the old gentleman, deliberately putting on his spectacles, and scrutinizing our hero narrowly, "this is your fortune-hunter, eh?"

Miss Bancroft blushed for her lover's embarrassment at this ill-timed question, and replied warmly,

"No, sir—no fortune-hunter, as he has shown by his conduct, which has proved him better than his words." She paused a moment, and then with a charming blush and smile she extended her hand to Seldon, and added, still addressing her father—

"He convinced me, sir, entirely to my satisfaction, that he was sincerely in love with the portionless Miss Dana—I shall not easily be persuaded that he does not feel an equally strong attachment to Miss Bancroft."

Her eyes full of tenderness met those of her lover, who, quite overwhelmed, could only kiss the little hand he held, and remain silent.

Mr. Bancroft was a fond father—his daughter an only child—and, as the reader may imagine, under such circumstances all difficulties were smoothed away. Yet no sooner had the old gentleman given his consent to their engagement, than our hero, with that remarkable facility people have of tormenting themselves with little difficulties, when they have overcome great ones, felt himself so disturbed by the error he constantly committed of calling his betrothed *Miss Dana*, that he allowed her no peace till by changing her name to Mrs. Seldon, he was relieved from so annoying an embarrassment.

In justice to our hero we must say, that his first feeling on discovering the young ladies' secret, was actual and positive disappointment that all his disinterestedness had been thrown away, and that he had wooed and won an heiress after all. Still, time reconciled him to this calamity, and he could not but acknowledge that his wife's fortune stood him in good stead till he had succeeded in establishing himself in his profession.

Frank Seldon was ere long regarded as the first physician of the place, and his skill and ability are unquestioned by all except his tormenting, bewitching little wife, who sometimes gravely shakes her head, and warns her friends not to trust him in cases of dangerous fainting fits, as his practice on such occasions is peculiar, and such as she does not approve of.

I am sorry to be obliged to add that the number of the *bona fide* Miss Dana's admirers suddenly diminished when she resumed her true character of a portionless maiden. One of them, however, who had been almost too modest to advance his claims when he thought her an heiress, now stepped boldly forward and offered her his hand. Touched by his generous conduct, Miss Dana promised to consider his suit favorably, and ere long she became the wife of one of the noblest of men.

THE CHANGING AND THE UNCHANGING.

BY ELISE GRAY.

THE sunlight of a summer morning shone over a city. There was vivid life in the ceaseless motion and sound. The glittering carriages of the wealthy rolled over the paved streets, and passed by the rough carts of the lowly men of toil.

The gay lady of high life attired in chameleon silks of beautiful, changing hues, met unheeding the widow in plain weeds of woe, or the begging child of misery and rags.

A grave philosopher walked with meditative step. He saw not the crowd, but an author's table in a little upper room. He had come to the last chapter of a work that must, Hope said, with eager voice, bring gold and a great name.

An artist was going to his studio, and with earnest gaze he studied all that could be seen of azure sky and white clouds floating above the high, dull walls. He was thinking of a sky of his own coloring, on which he would one day look with joy, and the world with praise.

In a cellar among sheaves of straw fell a spark of fire. No eye saw the tiny instrument that there began to do a great work of destruction. One slender blade gave at first a feeble light. Another and another caught the blaze, until the fierce hot flames rose high and kindled the beams above. A rush of many feet was heard, and screams of dismay. Fire—fire, was the cry—and water—bring water, was the call. Bells rang out their loud alarms, and men in crowds pressed toward the smoke and flames.

When the sun set that night the fires were subdued—so too were hope and energy in many a heart.

The author mourned the waste of years of intellectual toil. The strength of his great mind was changed to the weakness of a little child.

In the young artist's soul joy was turned to agony, as torturing fancy pictured to his eye the scorching flames blackening the glorious colors of his canvass.

The widow's woe had deeper grown. The humble rook—the scanty store of gold—last legacies of the lost, were *gone*.

The proud man of fortune and the gay lady gazed on the fallen pillars of their palace, and knew their wealth was changed to want deeper than the beggar's poverty.

VOL. XXIV.—9

Are not such life's *real* changes?

It was moonlight on the ocean. From a vessel's deck many happy eyes looked upward toward the full-orbed light, and down upon the waters sparkling in its silvery rays.

Friend clasped to friend paced closely the deck, inhaling the summer air and the sweeter breathings of affection. A grey-haired man sported with a mirthful child, and told him strange stories of sights all over the world and storms at sea, till the boys wondering eyes grew dim with sleep, and the grandfather bore him to their cabin couch, where soon age and infancy were lulled to deep repose, "rocked in the cradle of the deep."

It was past midnight, and the sleepers on the sea saw not the cloud that arose on the azure sky. They heard not the first wail of the wind, but soon the storm raged fearfully, and awoke them to wild terror.

Who hath ever told the horrors of a shipwreck on the ocean, when the "cry is help, but no help can come?"

The bark was lost.

The old man's silvery locks mingled a moment with the white foam of a wave. Then he sank down with the clinging boy.

Friend clasped to friend in life, descended together to that vast ocean sepulchre where lie the countless dead of the deep.

Changing as the sea from calm to storm, is life to death.

Hope suddenly flew to Love on fleet, bright wing, and whispered something only Love could hear—then quickly gave her pinions beauteous as her own, and they soared together and flew away. Hope drooped her wings upon a mountain height, and said to Love rest here—I will show thee thy future.

Then she touched Love's eyes with a strange wand, and Love looked and saw in the distance a land so wondrously beautiful, she turned away amazed, bewildered, and could not believe. Hope said, "fear not—it is surely thine. All that thy yearning nature desires is there—the streams of affection, and the flowers and fruits that drink their life on the borders—devotion and joy, and self-sacrifice and duty. Countless and nameless are the beauties and pleasures of thy future."

Love gazed with passionate, tender eyes, and said with earnest tone, "is this truly my earthly lot?"—then drooped her wings lower, for the burden of bliss was heavy, and wept for o'erflowing of soul. So she turned to the bosom of God to pour out its fulness there, and entreat His smile and His blessing.

Strange and beautiful deceiver art thou, oh, Hope! While Love's eyes were yet darkened with tears, the Siren flew suddenly away and was seen no more. Love turned her eyes and Hope was gone, and the glorious land of the enchantress had also vanished. Astonished, terrified she gazed—she waited, but Hope returned not again, nor the beautiful vision of her enchanted land, the future.

A wild, stern strife was in Love's soul, and she turned away from God, and could not say, "Thy will be done," for her heart cried out in

agony, "He hath no compassion." Her bright wings fell off, and her spirit was broken. Slowly came she down from the mountain of her glorious vision and temptation, and went away, wounded, to the cavern of Despair. There lay she long, till at last a white form softly entered and embraced her, and tenderly carried her out into the sunlight. A low voice said, "I am Faith, and am come to thy help." Then she drew around the child of sorrow a mantle unstained by the beautiful, changing hues of earth, but of snowy, spotless whiteness, and Faith said, "it is the robe of Resignation. Wear it ever—it shall shield thee in burning heat and wintry storm."

Then Faith lifted Love from the earth and bore her to the bosom of God, and Love raised her grief-dimmed eyes and said, "'even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.' Here will I rest, for God only is unchanging."

THE WHITE HOUSE UNDER THE ELMS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SUSY L——'S DIARY."

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 86.

CHAPTER IX.

WELL, days and weeks went by, as they went, jostling our hero, Frank, and tossing him sometimes, as if he were a foot-ball. He found himself often at Amy's side, or standing before her. Then he said to himself—"now thanks be given! Now I will have some rest; and never a dog needed it more. How good it is to be here! How beautiful and sweet she is! I would know she were near me, if I could neither see nor hear. I would feel refreshed and rested. I would know that she were near, by this."

Perhaps she let the refreshment, the rest go on a while. Perhaps she sat or stood near him, listening, in a very still way to what he was saying, or reading, answering in a still way, a sensible, charming way, so that Frank forgot that he would read on, or that he would talk on; and said inwardly—in the depths of his soul—"she is a jewel! There is not on this earth another so fair, so good! I could bear anything with her at my side, in my home, as my bride, my wife, as the mother of my children. Ah, God knows what a Paradise this would be." Amy fell in with his silent mood at first. She too—but Frank could not know what she thought or felt. He only knew that the expression of her bent face gave him encouragement, pleasure. If he advanced upon this, if he tried to take her hand in his, if he said, "Amy—Amy dear"—if he was on the point of adding the thought that was so often trembling on his lips—"I love you, Amy," she recoiled from him, with a look impassioned as she could make it, still with suffering in it, as Frank saw. She moved gently away; saying in gentle, often in choked tones—"I will see where mother is. I will see why she don't come." Or she said—"I will tell father you are here. He has something in the garden he wants to show you;" or when summer vacation came, "I will go and bring Davy."

Perhaps she did not return while he stayed. Perhaps she came when the rest were there, Webster, Wash, Johnny, Hesnut and all; and when the dim twilight was into the rooms. Or perhaps she came and stood close by her mother, where they all were in the yard or garden.

Frank was not all of the time at Swamscott. He often went to his uncle's works at Tuberville; of these works he had the direct supervision; was often at Springfield, or Andover, two, three, or more days at a time; and often at his uncle's summer place in Cambridge. He had, however, his wardrobe, his rambling equipments, and the best part of his library at Swamscott. He called it "coming home," when he came to Swamscott. This gave his friends there pride and pleasure. They liked to hear him coupling those two words in that way. All but Amy. She seemed to breathe more freely when he went, and to feel oppressed when he came. Davy said to her one day, that Frank would probably leave Swamscott in September; and that evening, and many evenings, she groaned half aloud in her chamber—"oh, when will September come."

If any one could know what was in Amy's way; what took her appetite and strength; what made her kinder and kinder toward all in the house, and toward Frank, when he was there, at the same time that the sad, thoughtful look about her mouth and eyes deepened more and more; if one could only know. But there seemed no way of finding it out, as may be gathered from the following little scenes.

SCENE I.—THE GARDEN.

Davy.—"Amy, my sister, you brush the beautiful calla."

Amy, with a languid smile. "Do I? I mustn't, must I?"

Davy.—"No. But there is one thing I *must* do. I must go off to old Dartmouth to-morrow. I rather hate it, on the whole; hate putting on the harness, tremendously, when I've been free a while. If you would do something but smile in that new, strange way, Amy," looking at her closely, "if you would cry a little and say as you used to—'I shall half die without you,' I could go feeling better. What *is* it, Amy? You are sadder than all the graves in Swamscott; what is it?"

Amy, propping up the calla she had bruised. "Nothing. You, all of you make mistakes about me. I am sure I laugh and talk as I always

have. I wish you would try and get it out of mother's head that I am sad, before you go. I will help you. I will laugh all the time."

Davy.—"That wont amount to anything unless you feel it; if, the next hour, one may come suddenly upon you, and see you—as I, as we all have seen you, so many times, lately! Tell me, Amy, what is the matter?"

Amy, looking in his face and speaking earnestly. "Not anything, Davy. At any rate, not anything worth naming. Not anything that I can or shall name. I will see to myself. I will soon look to heaven and be satisfied. And don't be troubled on my account, good, kind Davy. Don't let mother."

SCENE II.—THE PARLOR, AT NIGHT.

Frank, after having sat a long time silent.
"Amy."

Amy, her head bent low on her hand, "What say, Mr. Hazeltine?"

Frank.—"You will speak to me in this ice-cold way; will not once say 'Frank' to me as you used to, when I was a stranger. I see that you hate me; that you hate me more and more. You don't deny it," having waited for a disclaimer. "Still, how I can love you so much and you hate me, is more than I can understand. I must go from Swamscott." Still no answer. "I must go to-morrow, and not come back. You will try to like me a little better when I no longer trouble you, Amy?"

Amy, with a calm but sad look and tone; with a look, in fact, as if she were turning to marble. "I shall always think as I do now, that you have been very kind to me, much kinder than I have deserved. Good-bye," giving him her hand.

Frank, fondling her hand between both his own and kissing it. "Good-bye. God bless you for all that you have been to me; for all that you will be to me while I live."

SCENE III.—THE BREAKFAST ROOM.

Mrs. Hurlbut.—"What is my daughter thinking about, all this long time?"

Amy, starting and blushing, "I was thinking, a part of the time, about Davy's coming next Saturday."

Mrs. Hurlbut, sighing. "Still the thought seems to give you little pleasure. Davy will be happy to be at home with Frank here at the same time. They will go over all the old haunts. They will look almost like new ones, now that autumn has changed them so much."

Amy.—"Yes, they will, mother."

Mrs. Hurlbut.—"Winter is close by, once more. The rain beating on the windows, and the rose-

bushes and vines scraping the clapboards, tell a pretty loud story of its coming. Do you dread winter, Amy?" watching what answer her face gave.

Amy.—"I don't know. I believe I do; but I dare say I shall bear it very well when it comes. I have been thinking, mother, that I would like to go and see Cousin Mary. Her husband is coming to take Clarissa over early Saturday morning. They want me to go, and I want to."

Mrs. Hurlbut.—"And Davy will be here; and Frank, by a late train. You mustn't go."

Amy.—"Oh, I must, mother!" with pleading, suffering looks and tones. "Davy will oppose me, and father. But, mother, you will help me, wont you? Let them see that you think it best for me to go—for it is best, as God knows. You will help me to go, wont you, dearest, best mother? Poor mother!" going to her, and running her arm around her neck—"poor mother! the best mother that ever a girl had! I trouble you now; I know that I do; I have known it many a week. But it will be over. Let me go to Boxford; and I will cease all my—all my follies, and stupidities, and moping propensities there. You shall see, when I come back, that two fairies came to me at Boxford; one a wicked fairy, whom I shall send off with the whole load of discomforts she has been giving me, on her own shoulders; the other, a good fairy, will come with a smile, and put all manner of new pleasures and contentments into my heart. And then I will come home."

Mrs. Hurlbut, smiling and holding her daughter's hand, "Yes, this is fine. How long will it be? how long must you stay for all these things to be done?"

Amy.—"Four weeks, I think. I may go?"

Mrs. Hurlbut.—"Yes; you shall go. Your father and Davy shan't say one word to hinder you."

Amy.—"The best mother! I will tell the fairies when they come, that my mother is better than theirs can possibly be."

CHAPTER X.

WE will next show our readers parts of certain letters that, while Amy was at Boxford, passed between her and one Gustavus Spencer, a gentleman unknown, as yet, to the reader, but very well known to Amy. He was the adopted child of her parents; and was in their family, as if he were a legitimate child of the house from the age of three to nineteen. From his fourth year to his ninth, inclusive, he was Amy's little husband and she was his little wife; from his ninth to

his nineteenth he was her little brother, she his sister. Then, on the evening before the day on which he would go to meet an older brother, the only one left of his family, now in New Mexico, to try his hand at the game of fortune there, he asked her if she would be his wife when he came back—that was, if he came back rich as a Jew, and built a sort of tiny palace for her to live in.

She didn't care for his coming back as rich as a Jew, Amy said. Nor for the tiny palace he would build. She had always thought that she would like it best, living in a little brown house without any paint on it; a house like Mr. Tracy's. But she would marry him when he came back, if he still liked her and wanted her for his wife. But the whole affair was to be kept, oh, so close between them! They were to speak and look the next morning, and to the time of his starting, precisely as if they were *not* engaged. Not a line was to be sent by him or her, while he was gone, lest people should find out something. He was to write often to Davy; Davy was to write often to him; and in that way they could hear about each other, and perhaps send some little messages now and then—just remembrances and so on.

Amy was sixteen then. Now she was nineteen. Three years, and especially the last half year, had wrought great changes in the girl. She had been, for some time, in the midst of fiery trials; but now she had arisen to walk out of them. She was no longer irresolute, no longer weak; for she thought that now she saw clearly what it was her duty to do—her duty as regarded not only herself, but Gustavus, and—and one other. And she bowed her head in infinite tenderness at every thought of that "one other." She had come to Boxford to do it. No, Cousin Clarissa; no, Cousin Mary; she could neither ride, nor walk, nor see company, that day. She must stay alone in her chamber and write a letter.

She wrote in a very candid, a very womanly way. After reviewing the years they had spent together as brother and sister, the circumstances and conditions of their early, impromptu betrothal, she said—"And now tell me, Gustavus, do you not find that it is very easy to live so long and so far from me? do you not find it easier and easier every year, every month? Could you not now find another who would be more suitable for you, with your love of splendor, and bustle, and travel, whom you could love with a much heartier love than you ever did or ever can me, your 'chicken-hearted little sister?' You remember that this is what you were always calling me; and I am sure you felt a little contempt sometimes for my want of pride and spirit.

"I think you can answer 'yes' to all these questions. If you can I shall be glad. I shall be glad to be your sister till my dying day, to welcome you when you come from your long journey, to be the bride's-maid of your bride, (especially if she should happen to be one Clarissa Jackson) and then to go often to see you and her in your beautiful palace. Clarissa is very sprightly, very beautiful, very noble too. She always liked you—after she was over that long dislike, that is; and Davy and I have both seen that she changes color at your name.

"Don't delay an hour answering me. Tell me all your feelings and thoughts, as I have told you all mine.

"God grant that you may be very happy, and have an abundance of friends off there. Don't forget Him in trying to be rich; for dark hours must come to you. They come to all. And when they come nothing is sufficient for us but His right arm,

Your loving sister,

AMY."

CHAPTER XI.

GUSTAVUS SPENCER TO AMY HURLBUT.

"DEAR CHILD, you struck me 'all in a heap,' as old Mrs. Peters says. But I do believe I—*id est*, (I don't forget all my Latin, you see, as you said I would) I believe you see into things pretty well. The fact is, I am bound to be rich. I will have that palace yet; and if I get a palace, I can easily enough find a mistress for it. You wouldn't marry me for a palace, but there are enough who will. Fudge! I will none of them, though! When I get rich, I will tell you what I will do. So! Here, Amy, I have been to my feet to jump and clap my hands for the new thought I have. You shall hear! I will get as rich as a Jew; then I will go poking homeward with—ah, but I shan't tell. You'll tell Clarissa; or if you don't tell her, she'll find the letter and read for herself. I remember all of her rummaging old ways. This is my message to her. Tell her I remember all her rummaging old ways; and how I could never keep spruce-gum nor maple-sugar in table-drawer nor trunk-till, for her pelfish fingers. Tell her this. Tell Davy I'm thinking of California. Tell him to answer my last letter soon, or I may perhaps be off before it comes. Tell yourself to be 'easy as an old shoe' about me. Get married if you find anybody that is good enough for you—anybody that is *really* good enough, I mean. I never was. I never should be. I think, on my troth, that I would rather have a wife that I shan't be quite so much afraid of. For instance, I never dared

to go near you without thinking back whether I was being swearing or lying any for the day. I must always look in my pocket mirror too, to see if my face was clean and my hair parted even. This was when I was a boy, you see.

"Good-bye. Love to all. Remember me, all of you. Don't forget this. There is nobody else to remember me and be glad when I come back, you know. And if there is nobody to do it, I shall dig a hole for my gold, put on a cowl, and go round with my head down wishing myself dead,

Your loving brother,
GUSTAVUS."

"*Post Scriptum*.—If the time comes, Amy, when you sit and hem pillow-cases and towels, send word to me. I want to send you something.

"If any one comes near Clarissa to talk about marriage, shoot him for me. Seriously, if any one does, write and tell me about it,

Thine,
Gust."

CHAPTER XII.

Mrs. HURLBUT believed in fairies from the day that Amy came back from Boxford. All felt the change; even Hesnut gambolled with higher glee, now that Amy often said—"Hi! Hesnut;" and snapped her fingers in the old way. To the good parents it was as if some dark clouds were swept away, and the sun and the mild moon and stars, by turns, were shining in their place.

Miss Humphreys, who, for a long time had watched Amy as if she were a barometer, saw, at the instant of meeting, the light in her face, the buoyancy in her frame. She went away tossing her head, curling her lip in an unnamable way, and saying to her mother—"they've got him at last! Anybody can see that just looking at Miss Amy. Well, they're welcome to him; they've tried hard enough, at any rate, Davy and all. I wouldn't take so much pains for a king."

It was evening, in the depths of the winter. Old snows were spread out and heaped up in smooth drifts and in graceful wreaths; and now a new snow was falling in broad, lazy flakes, darkening the sky and obstructing the way. It was windy; it was stinging cold. So that, on the whole, it was dubious without; but within—that is, good reader, within the white house under the elms—was a cheerful scene, made up of contented faces, of warmth, and of ruddy light falling upon crimson curtains, upon carpet, and upon scarlet and white flowers, and dark green leaves in their brown vases.

Suddenly there was a noise of fast jingling bells, of a horse's tramp and of sleigh-runners crushing the snow. Of the gate opening, of

vigorous feet coming to the door, and then, whew! of the door-bell.

"It's the preceptor!" said Wash. "It's the way he always drives up and rings. I'm glad." He was on the way to let him.

"Hallo!" said he, at the door. "I told 'em it was you, Mr. Singleton. I knew it was."

Mr. Singleton, meantime, just lay his hand on the boy's head a moment, and now he was jumping and stamping in just Mr. Singleton's own way, to get the snow off.

"Come in here; right in here, where they all are, and where it's warm as toast," entreated Wash, now hold of his hand to lead him.

Good! It was no more Ned Singleton than it was you, my bachelor friend. On the contrary, it was Ben Frank Hazeltine, as Wash and all the rest saw as soon as he came into the parlor door. He was covered with snow, he was stiffened with the cold, like a white polar bear. But they surrounded him. They clung to him one minute, Mr. and Mrs. Hurlbut to his cold hands, Wash and Johnny to his overcoat.

Amy—bless her! what high satisfaction one saw beneath the quiet manner! Even Wash saw it.

"Amy likes you as well as Johnny and I do, now; I know she does," said he, cuddling close to Frank. In passing, Mrs. Hurlbut had gone to the kitchen to see to having something hot and refreshing for Frank; Mr. Hurlbut to the stable to make his tired horse comfortable.

"Do you think she does?" said Frank, seating himself and drawing Wash and Johnny close to him.

"Yes; I know she does. I can always tell when she likes anybody."

"And when she don't?" smiling.

"Yes; and when she don't. She didn't use to like you very well last summer, when you were here."

Wash, as was evident, doubted a little whether it was right to say that; but was reassured upon finding that Frank and Amy both laughed.

"She was too bad, wasn't she, Wash?"

"Yes; I used to be almost mad with her sometimes."

"Yes, so did I too."

In short, it was clear from the free, changed way in which Frank carried himself, from the eyes seeking Amy's, lingering on her's so often without a shadow of fear or uncertainty in them, as well as from his coming there tramping, so late at night, unannounced, unexpected, that the good fairy of whom Amy spoke, had been whispering in his ear. Those who say—"poh! no, that can't be!" to this hypothesis, may believe,

if they choose, that Davy had been telling him of the long-standing engagement to Gustavus Spencer, and of her release from that engagement. There is some reason for this belief, I confess; for that day week, Davy received a letter from Spencer telling him the whole story, and sending love to Amy and Clarissa; and that day—that is, the day in which Frank appeared at the white house, he had a letter from Davy, a very long letter. Frank read half of it and then flew one way and another, that he might be ready for the last train of cars off Swamscott way. He couldn't be ready, and so he started at sunset, with his own horse and sleigh.

"One moment, Amy," said Frank, when, at a late hour, she would have left the parlor for the

night with her father and mother. "Please stay one moment."

He went over to her, took her hand, and looked into her eyes. Or, he tried to look into her eyes. But she dropped them; she dropped her head; she trembled like a leaf. And so Frank just took her into his arms and held her close; feeling, that she was now his own. He too trembled; for he had suffered much. Now he enjoyed much. He said—"dear Amy." She answered, with her arm sliding about his neck—"dear Frank—good Frank."

And this is all we have to say. Only they were married when New-Year came.

Good-bye, good readers; especially, thou good bachelor reader, who envieth Frank.

"WHAT CAN AIL HER?"

BY JANE WEAVER.

"How is your wife, to-day?" said an acquaintance to Mr. Morris, a thriving store-keeper in the town of —.

"She's but middling," was the reply. "Has constant headache, with no appetite, and is getting as thin as a skeleton."

"She used to be so healthy-looking," answered the acquaintance. "I remember her, before she was married, as blooming a beauty as you'd see in a thousand."

"Yes! But you'd scarcely know her now, if you hadn't seen her since. I can't imagine what can ail her."

Mrs. Morris had been a wife just eight years. Prior to her marriage, she had been, as her husband's acquaintance said, one of the most blooming girls of the neighborhood. She was celebrated, in fact, for her rosy cheeks, bright eyes, elastic step, and never-failing flow of spirits. But now she was sallow, had lost all her vivacity, and was frightfully emaciated: indeed many of her friends began to think she was in a decline.

What had worked this change? Her husband said he could not tell. But perhaps we can inform you, reader.

Mrs. Morris had been tenderly brought up, and, until her marriage, knew not what care was. But, in uniting herself to Mr. Morris, she had ignorantly made herself the slave of a penurious husband, who, in order to save a little more, continually tasked her strength to the utmost. At first, he would not allow her to employ any servant, though his three clerks boarded in the family, and though now she was permitted to have one, it was because there were four children in addition, and one of these still an infant. Used to household duties, and to a certain portion of daily labor, at her old home, Mrs. Morris was, nevertheless, unable to bear the enormous burden thus laid upon her.

She tried, indeed, to do what was expected of her. No complaint ever passed her lips. Many an evening, after a day of exhausting drudgery, she sat up till midnight sewing, while her husband read his newspaper, smoked his cigar, or dozed on the sofa. Sometimes the thought rose to her lips, that it was hard she only should have no leisure, but she never allowed it to find

expression in words. Patiently she worked on, stifling even a sigh as criminal.

But this was not the worst, alas! Often her husband would come in vexed, the result of some untoward business affair; and, at such times, the wife was always the target for his ill-temper. Nothing pleased Mr. Morris on these occasions. The supper did not suit him, the children were not managed right, he did not see why Mrs. Morris must be forever looking as if she hadn't a friend in the world. Frequently it was as much as the poor wife could do to keep back her tears.

What wonder that, with this life of drudgery, with these heart miseries, Mrs. Morris should lose the plumpness of her figure, the brilliancy of her complexion, and her elasticity of spirits. Or what wonder that the birth of four children, in less than eight years, combined with these, should make her, at last, a confirmed invalid. Yet her selfish husband never allowed himself to see how it all came about. He still continued to over-task his invalid wife, and would not, or could not see that he was killing her. She had never had any violent disease, but had only gradually become feeble, so he could not comprehend it. "I can't imagine," he would say, "what can ail her?"

Meantime, though an industrious man himself, Mr. Morris often took a day for recreation. In summer he usually went to the sea-shore for a week or two. In addition he always rested on Sunday. But he never took his wife with him, when he went away, whether for a day or a fortnight; and Sunday was to her no day of rest, since he insisted on having a particularly nice dinner then, which Mrs. Morris had to cook. And as she grew more and more sallow, under this treatment, and lost finally what little appetite had been left to her, her husband wondered more and more "what could ail her."

In reality he began at last to think himself quite badly treated. It was a very hard thing, he reflected, if he was to have a sick wife all his days. "He did not see," he said, "for his part, what was the matter with the women: they were good for nothing in these days; but Mrs. Morris, he really believed, was the sickliest of all. Nothing agreed with her any more. She

took pills every two hours, but her appetite didn't come back. A married man had need to be made of money. What could ail her?"

There are a good many such husbands in the world, for Mr. Morris is, alas! no rare specimen. Thousands of meek, uncomplaining women, the wives of selfish, brutal husbands, are scattered all over this fair land of ours, dying by inches,

while their thoughtless or heartless task-masters wonder "what can ail them."

Mrs. Morris will die prematurely, partly from drudgery, partly from a broken heart. But as she will not have any violent disease, her husband will go about to the day of her death, saying,

"WHAT CAN AIL HER?"

KITTY PLEASANTON'S FIRST OFFER.

BY M. W. DEWEES.

I CANNOT remember the time when I was not in love with Kitty Pleasanton. It must have begun when we were both babies. I am sure I loved her as we sat together by the road-side soaking our dandelion stems in the little puddles of water to make them curl; my passion was in no wise abated, when, somewhat later, I climbed cherry-trees at her bidding; nor later yet, when at dancing-school I awkwardly made my new-learned bow, and asked her to be my partner; nor, I am very sure, was my boyish passion at all damped, when, on my return from college, I found my sweet little Kitty, changed, by some undefinable alteration, from a lovely child, to a bewitching young woman. She was *almost* the same as when I parted from her three years before—the woman was very like the child—there were the same rosy cheeks, the same pouting, innocent mouth, the same curling hair, but some charm, grace, or sentiment was added, which made my heart thrill with new emotion as I gazed at her.

"Kitty," said I, to her, one day, after I had been at home a week or two, and I found I could restrain myself no longer. "Kitty, I'm very much in love with you, as you know as well as I do. I've always been in love with you, and I fancy you with me; but now I want you to promise to marry me." I paused, but Kitty made no answer.

"You like me, Kitty? don't you?"

"First tell me," said Kitty, blushing, and with an odd mixture of delight and bashfulness in her face, "if you've made me what is called 'an offer?'"

"To be sure I have, my darling, an offer which I trust, and hope, you'll accept."

"Don't be too sure of that," said Kitty, demurely.

"Kitty! you love me?"

"That's my secret," the provoking little thing replied.

"But at any rate," she continued, "I could not possible think of accepting the very first offer I ever received—I should be mortified all the rest of my life if I did. No, indeed; no girl of spirit would dream of taking up her first offer, as if she were afraid she should never have another. Excuse me, James, I can't possible accept you till I've had at least *one* other offer."

"But, my dearest Kitty," I began.

"Kitty! Kitty! Kitty! will you never learn to call me by my proper name, Mr. Brant? I confess I did hope, that when I received my 'first offer,' the person who made it would have addressed me with proper courtesy, and in a manner befitting the occasion, giving me my name of Katharine, but now you've gone and spoiled it all."

"Oh, I suppose you wanted a stiff, ceremonious proposal in form; but I'm no Sir Charles Grandison, Kitty, Katharine, I would say—therefore don't be foolish—be content to know in plain words, that my whole heart is yours; and have the good sense to accept your first offer, since your second may not be so good."

But vain were my arguments and reasonings. Kitty was determined not to accept her first offer, and finding her resolute, I changed my tone, acquiesced in her views, confessed that after all, I, too, had a certain pride on that point, and should be rather mortified to know that my wife had never had any offer but that I had myself made her; and so I promised to suspend my suit till Kitty should have been so fortunate as to receive an offer from some other quarter.

Now there was, not far from where Kitty dwelt, a favorite dell, or bower, or something of the kind,

to which she daily repaired with some chosen volume to sit and read. All my endeavors to persuade her to allow me to accompany her thither had always been quite in vain. Kitty was firm in preferring her undisturbed solitude, and I was daily doomed to an hour or two of the mopes during her romantic woodland visit.

In pursuance with this custom, Kitty set out soon after the conversation I have sketched, declining, as usual, my offers of companionship.

Not more than half an hour had elapsed after she had reached her favorite seat, ere her attention was attracted by a young gentleman who was fishing in the brook which flowed near her.

Kitty drew back a little on seeing him, but her curious eyes occasionally wandered toward the stranger. The latter, no sooner perceived his fair observer, than he bowed with an air of great politeness, and advancing a few steps, ventured to address to her a few words of commonplace greeting. The young man's words were indeed commonplace, but his eyes were far more eloquent than his tongue—they plainly informed the fair Kitty that she had found a new admirer. Kitty, highly flattered, received the stranger's advances graciously, and the youth being by no means bashful, half an hour found them chatting easily and gaily on various topics of interest. Kitty's stay in the woods was something longer than usual that afternoon.

"What is the matter, Kitty?" I asked, on meeting her soon after her return home. "Your eyes sparkle, and you look as pleased as though you had met a fairy in your afternoon ramble."

"It's better than a fairy," cried Kitty, breathlessly, "it's a young man."

"Indeed!" I ejaculated, with a whistle.

"Yes, James, and he's so handsome—so agreeable—so—so delightful, that I can't say *how* things might go if he were to make me, some of these days, my second offer."

"You can't impose upon me in that kind of way, sweet Kitty, so don't attempt it," I exclaimed. "I'll be bound the impudent fellow, whom I wouldn't object to speaking a bit of my mind to, I say, Kitty, I don't believe he's any handsomer or more agreeable than I am myself."

Kitty laughed aloud in derision.

"He's a thousand million times handsomer," she cried, scornfully, "and as much more entertaining as he is more handsome."

"Come, Kitty, don't be too cutting, too cruel," I began, but Kitty drew herself up with dignity.

"They call me Katharine, who do speak to me, sir."

"Katharine, fiddlesticks," I cried, "Kitty is the prettiest, and sweetest name in the world,

and comes most natural to me—don't bother me with your Katharine."

"I dare say you may like it," said Kitty, pouting, half angrily, "but I don't. It's too free. How would you like it if I persisted in calling you Jim? I declare I'll call you Jim, if you go on calling me Kitty."

"Do so if you like, and it will soon sound to me like the sweetest name in the world. But may I presume to beg from my fair and gracious Lady Katharine a description of this wood-Adonis she has been encountering?"

"He is tall," began Kitty.

"Taller than I?" I interrupted. Kitty annihilated me by a look.

"By at least half a foot—and of an elegant figure," she continued, with marked emphasis. "He was dressed in a fishing costume which greatly become him."

"I have an old fishing blouse, up stairs," I muttered, *sotto voce*, "I think I'll get it out."

"The young man's manners were uncommonly easy and gentlemanly, and withal perfectly respectful and deferential," continued Kitty; "having ascertained my name, he never once forgot himself so far as to abbreviate it, his conduct contrasting favorably in this respect with that of some of my friends."

"Well, Kitty, what other perfections had your hero, or have you exhausted your list?"

"Far from it," said Kitty, indignantly. "He wears his hair parted down the middle like a poet, or that charming Signor Pozzolini in the part of Edgardo——"

"Or a Methodist parson," I put in.

"And besides all that," continued Kitty, "he has a moustache."

"A last, best gift—but, Kitty, that perfection, I hope, will not be very difficult of achievement. I'll begin to-morrow. Let me see—tall—handsome—agreeable—good manners—elegant figure, and a moustache! On the whole, Kitty, I think I'm very much afraid of my new rival."

"You have cause," Kitty replied, with grave dignity.

The next day when Kitty reached her little retreat, she found the stranger again in its neighborhood; I must do the little coquette the justice of confessing that she did look startled, and indeed vexed, when she saw him, but perhaps thinking it too late to retreat, she advanced timidly. The youth met her with many apologies, and a plausible pretence for his intrusion which she could not gainsay, while something flattering in his manner made her blushing divine that the hope of again seeing her, had been the true cause of his reappearance. Be

that as it might, the stranger, perhaps to give Kitty time to recover her confidence, immediately sauntered off in pursuit of his sport, and Kitty, fancying she had seen the last of her new admirer, drew forth her book, and settling herself in a mossy corner began to read. She had scarcely succeeded in fixing her attention on its pages, however, before the pertinacious stranger again reappeared, and declaring that fishing was dull work, and the fish would not bite, he composedly seated himself at Kitty's feet, and begged to know the name of the book she was reading.

"Tennyson's Princess," replied Kitty, shortly.

The imperturbable stranger declared the book a great favorite of his, and began to talk so entertainingly of books and authors, that Kitty, warmed by the subject, forgot to be dignified, and an animated discourse of favorite authors ensued. Afterward the young man begged permission to read her a few admirable passages from the book she held in her hand, and it so happened that the passages he selected were the very ones Kitty loved best—he read them well, too, and Kitty's bright eyes sparkled with delight as she listened. Turning at last to the exquisite concluding interview between Ida and the young prince, the stranger's voice became more and more earnest as he read, till, coming to the words—

"Indeed I love thee; come,
Yield thyself up; my hopes and thine are one;
Accomplish thou my manhood and thyself—
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me."

He suddenly flung aside the book, exclaiming,

"What words—what words! what would I not give for courage to utter them to the being I love best on earth." The stranger paused a moment, and then broke forth impetuously,

"This forced silence is all in vain—the words I would repress *will* come—in vain have I striven to be prudent—cautious—to allow you time—not to startle you—lovely, bewitching, Miss Katharine—you are yourself the object of my secret adoration—to whom I would say much if I dared," and thereupon the youth rather melodramatically fell on one knee, and forthwith proceeded to make Kitty a very plain offer of his hand.

Meanwhile Kitty had risen from her seat, and recovering from her astonishment, she drew herself up with dignity and replied,

"I hardly know, sir, what you mean by your very strange words and conduct. The liberty you have taken has made me very sensible of my own imprudence in having allowed the advances of a stranger so—presuming—an error I shall be careful never to repeat." So saying, my proud

little Kitty (never had she looked so handsome) turned from the stranger with a distant bow, and walked directly home.

I did not see Kitty till some time after her return; perhaps she was recovering her spirits in her own room, for when I met her she was as full of mischief as ever.

"Well, James, why don't you ask me about my adventures to-day?" she inquired.

"Because I didn't suppose you would be so imprudent as to go again to-day where you would be likely to encounter the insolent puppy who presumed to address you yesterday."

"I didn't in the least expect him to be there," said Kitty, blushing, and somewhat confused, "but he *was* there."

"Of course," I replied, gruffly. "Well, was your Adonis as handsome and agreeable as ever?"

"More so!" cried Kitty, recovering her composure; "he looked more Massaniello-like than ever in his fishing dress; and for entertainment, he first read me all the finest parts of Tennyson's Princess, and then made a marriage proposal, and I don't think any man could be expected to do more in one afternoon."

"I should think not indeed—pray what reply did you make to the rascal?—that you had a friend at home who would be happy to kick him well for his insolence?"

"Far from it," said Kitty; "what my reply was, is my secret—and his; but for you, my poor James, I'm sorry for you—it's all over with you, and your offer."

"Why you good-for-nothing, little, deceitful puss!" cried I, losing all patience, "there never was a more arrant dissembler living. Behold how plain a tale shall put you down—for lo—I, myself, disguised merely by a little paint—a fishing-blouse, a false moustache, and a change in the arrangement of my hair, was, in my own person, this elegant—captivating—handsome, agreeable stranger, whose praises you have never tired of sounding."

Poor Kitty was completely confounded.

"How could I have been so stupid?" she murmured—"and the voice, too, which sounded so familiar all the time."

"Yes, Kitty, you're caught, and to punish you for attempting just now, to palm a wicked falsehood upon me, I shall impose a two-fold fine. First, you shall kiss me; and then fix our wedding day, which must be very shortly, for I'm going to Europe in a month, and you must go with me."

Kitty gave a little scream, and declared that she could not think of submitting to either of my penalties; but in vain she struggled, and

protested—I had her in my arms, and finding at last all her efforts to release herself fruitless, her jests and laughter suddenly changed to earnest tenderness, and closing her arms round me, she said,

“As you will, dear—dearest Jamie!”

“One month from to-day then, my own, sweet, darling Kitty.”

“Katharine,” whispered Kitty.

“Katharine then,” I repeated, smiling at her pertinacity on this point—“one month from to-day, my Katharine.”

“You never put any adjectives before *Katharine*,” murmured Kitty, evasively, hiding her blushing and pouting face.

“My own dear, gracious, winning, bewitching, most kissable Katharine—shall it be as I say?”

“If mamma chooses,” whispered Kitty. And so I persuaded the sweetest and prettiest girl in the country to accept her first and only lover; and though to this day my merry little wife often complains that I defrauded her, by my tricks, of her natural womanly right, of breaking two or three hearts, at least, ere she made one man supremely blest, still she generally concludes her reproaches in a manner most flattering to my vanity, by declaring that she *had* two offers after all—and each of her's was worth a thousand common ones.

"WELL, I WON'T."

BY ELLEN ASHTON.

If there was anything Harry Mordaunt hated it was to hear a young lady use under-bred language, but especially slang words. His idea of the sex was so lofty, the result of companionship with a refined mother and sisters, that he associated coarseness with all who employed such phrases.

"Yet you'll marry a woman," said a friend to him, one day, "who'll have some pet bit of slang. Most girls have, now-a-days, so it is hard for any man to escape; but fastidious people are sure to get caught, merely, I suppose, because they are fastidious."

Harry shook his head in the negative.

"Oh! I know you don't believe me," replied his friend, "but wait and see. You don't think a young lady is going to talk slang to a handsome, rich fellow like you, on a first acquaintance. The girls are too sly for that. They always dress their best, smile their prettiest, and talk in their most refined style at first; but when they find the acquaintance has changed into the lover they grow more careless; and at last, when they are fairly married, they throw off all disguise, and return to their original state of dowdiness, ill-temper, or slang, as the case may be."

"You are too severe," said Mordaunt. "Even if some are like you describe them, all are not so. But I have no time to discuss the sex with you to-day, my good fellow, having an appointment to drive out with one, which comes off immediately. So good-bye for the present."

"Good-bye," replied the friend, and, as Mordaunt turned the corner, he resumed to himself. "Yes! there he goes, as great a fool as the rest of them, madly in love with Kate Richards, whom he thinks the most lady-like of her sex. Yet, careful as she is in his presence, she's as much given to slang phrases as the worst of them. Sis says that, among her own sex, she's positively vulgar. Ah! he'll find her out at last; but it will be too late. It's a pity, too, for Mordaunt's a fine fellow."

Yet it was not surprising that Kate Richards had secured Mordaunt among her train of admirers. Tall in person, with a shapely figure, a dashing air, a pair of fine eyes, excellent taste in dress, and a sprightly manner, which never

degenerated into rudeness, at least in Mordaunt's presence, she seemed exactly the *beau ideal* he had long worshipped in secret, but which he had never before found. Insipid women were as much his aversion as vulgar ones; a dowdy he abhorred; and one without beauty he could never love, though he might esteem her. But Kate Richards was, or seemed to be, the complete sum of all the perfections he sought in a wife.

We say seemed, for his friend was correct, and Kate *did* use slang words, nay! fancied there was wit in it. She had caught up all the current phrases of this description, and prided herself on the aptness with which she introduced them into conversation. "Well, I won't," "No, you don't," "I cal'klate not," and other similar phrases, were forever on her tongue. She had an instinctive sense, however, that Mordaunt disliked them, and as he was decidedly the match of the season, she took care never to indulge in them in his presence. It was not always an easy matter to refrain. Sometimes a phrase was already on her lips. But she was fortunate to remember, in time, her lover's fastidiousness, and so succeeded, at last, in bringing him to the crisis of a declaration.

It was at a gay and brilliant party, where Kate shone the wittiest and most beautiful of all, that Mordaunt finally resolved to ask her hand. He had escorted her there, and, during the drive, had suffered his manner to betray so much admiration, that Kate felt certain he meant to propose, on the return. Perhaps this was one secret of her high spirits, and of her unusually dazzling beauty. The centre of an admiring crowd, she rattled on, and even ventured, as her lover was just then in another room, to retort with a slang phrase or two on a gentleman, who was engaged in a passage of wit with her. The aptness of the quotations raised a laugh, which partially discomfited her antagonist, but returning to the charge, he turned another slang phrase against her. The listeners did not see how Kate could keep up the play of words, but, excited by the strife, she answered him immediately in the same strain, without thinking to observe if Mordaunt had returned or not. The victory was her's, but at what a cost! For, as she concluded, amid a burst of laughter that entirely silenced her

adversary, her lover approached. He caught only her concluding words, they were "well, I won't," but they were sufficient to destroy, at a blow, his idol. The refined Miss Richards became revealed, from that moment, for what she was, an intrinsically coarse woman, who fancied vulgarity was wit. He turned on his heel, and did not approach her again, until the time came to depart. The drive home was a silent one; he bade her good night stiffly; and never again called on her.

Often did Kate regret, after that, her use of slang phrases. But nevertheless she could not cure herself of the practice of quoting them, if the occasion appeared apt, for habit is a stern task-master. She finally married, but does not live happily. The only man she ever loved was

Mordaunt, and she cannot, even yet, conquer her regret at losing him.

When it became certain that the intimacy between Mordaunt and Kate had been broken off, his friend ventured, one day, to rally the former lover on the subject.

"So you're not going to marry Kate Richards after all," said the friend, with a knowing look, for he had been one of the circle, whom Kate had been amusing at the ball.

Mordaunt understood the look, and recalling their former conversation, answered, for once in his life, and it was the only time, in the strain he so much censured.

Shrugging his shoulders, he said, significantly, and with a look of deep disgust,

"WELL, I WON'T."